The Nation

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EDI

Oh, SAY CAN YOU SEE . . .

Pete Rose, the redoubtable "Charlie Hustle" of the Cincinnati Reds baseball club, charges $15 to sign his autograph these days. As it turns out, that is precisely the value the Interior Department places on any fur-bearing seal unfortunate enough to have gotten in harm's way when the Exxon Valdez ran aground in March.

The department has not shown much inclination to investigate Exxon and its sibling oil-spillers (who recently have been quite busy mishapping further in various waters around the country) for gambling with the environment. Thus, we all have had to make do with the ferocious inspection by Bart Giamatti, the baseball commissioner, of Rose's apparent enthusiasm for betting on his own team. Such diversions are what Juvenal, the early Roman poet and shortstop, liked to call "bread and circuses," though in Rose's case the bread seems to be in increasingly short supply, which may explain why the man who broke Ty Cobb's total hits record is peddling his own signature.

Which brings us, logically, to the American flag and George Bush. The President, like Rose a sometime first baseman and all-time hustler, is very unhappy about the 5-4 ruling of the Supreme Court June 21 that upheld desecration of the flag as a valid exercise of First Amendment rights. He would prefer to desecrate the Constitution, and has called on Congress to tinker with the First Amendment.

A daily baseball lottery may be a better way to honor Old Glory. The winning number would be determined by adding the average player's salary ($500,000) to the number of fans actually singing the words to "The Star-Spangled Banner" and dividing that sum by the number of seconds it takes Oliver North to raise the flag on the center-field pole. Pete Rose would, of course, be ineligible.

GOD AND THE FLAG
Edward Sorel

LABOR AND EUROPE 1992
Hilary Wainwright

THE SHILLS OF THE SENATE
David Corn

RURAL HOME WORK
Osha Gray Davidson

BLACKS IN WESTERN ART
Paul Mattick Jr.

SPIKE LEE 'BATMAN'
Stuart Klawans

'BIRD-CAGE SOCIALISM'?

CHINA GROPES TOWARD A WAY OUT

PETER KWONG AND DUŠANKA MIŠČEVIĆ

Shanghai

In the aftermath of the Beijing massacre of unarmed citizens and pro-democracy demonstrators, Shanghai was the first major Chinese city to employ drastic measures to squash popular protest. Following a public announcement by Shanghai's Mayor, Zhu Rongji, the city authorities recruited paid goon squads (officially "voluntary workers' order maintenance squads") to stand at important street intersections, ready to pounce on dissenters, and mobilized thousands of plainclothes security officers to tail activists. Night arrests, show trials and the executions of three workers on June 21 sent chills through Shanghai; the reign of terror quickly brought this city of 13 million "back to normal," as Shanghai's administrators would have it.

Yet Shanghai's officials have been at pains to distance themselves from the actions taken by the central government to quell the demonstrations in Beijing. Shanghai's rulers appeared interested only in restoring order, transportation and communications so that workers could return to their jobs, thereby preventing further losses in production. The fact that the first three death sentences were handed down to workers, not students, sent a clear signal.

Privately, none of the city and party officials we spoke to were ready to embrace Beijing's official version of the June 4 massacre in Tiananmen Square. They see the roots of the current trouble in a power struggle at the

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LETTERS.

MY OPUS

New York City

I would like to point out a number of errors of a serious nature pertaining to the Prelature of Opus Dei in Penny Lernoux's recent two-part article on Catholicism ["Opus Dei and the 'Perfect Society,'" April 10; "A Reverence for Fundamentalism," April 17]. Lernoux should have taken into account recent civil investigations in Italy and Spain and a significant court decision in the Federal Republic of Germany brought about by a libel case initiated by Opus Dei. These investigations declared that the Prelature is *not* a secret organization with a right-wing (or left-wing) political agenda, that it is *not* an economic enterprise, and that *no* members of Opus Dei (or Opus Dei itself) were involved in the illegal coup that overthrew the Allende government in Chile.

Members of Opus Dei are totally free in all secular matters, be they political, economic or otherwise. The vast majority are working people. The explicit teaching of the founder, Msgr. José María Escrivá, is that the value of work done, whatever kind of work it might be, depends on the love of God with which it is carried out, conjoined with the concern members exercise for their family, friends and fellow workers. The caricature of Opus Dei and of its founder presented by Lernoux in these and other areas manifests deficient reporting and unsubstantiated generalizations.

Monsignor Escrivá is widely recognized as a precursor of the Second Vatican Council. He founded Opus Dei in 1928, eleven years *before* Franco came to power. All of the popes with whom he dealt, beginning with Pius XII, showed great confidence in him. Indeed, Pope John XXIII entrusted to Opus Dei the task of setting up a technical school in the Tiburtino district, one of the poorest sections of Rome. Pope Paul VI, accompanied by many of the council fathers, visited and praised this social work and Opus Dei at the end of Vatican II.

Opus Dei has four universities, three of which are in Third World countries, which enable people of limited economic means the opportunity of an education they would otherwise not receive. Opus Dei operates no television or radio stations and controls no newspapers. Members work in every conceivable kind of occupation and do so on their own responsibility and are completely free of any imposition by Opus Dei on their opinions and decisions. Opus Dei does not concern itself with *any* temporal positions of an economic, social or professional kind.

It is false to describe Opus Dei as "elitist," since it includes members of every walk of life. Nor is there anything secret about Opus Dei. No institution in the church has undergone a more thorough investigation by the Holy See in consultation with local bishops around the world. Its statutes were fully approved and sanctioned by the universal church in 1982; it is therefore false to attribute legal value to the 1950 Constitutions: Members objected to some aspects of those in a general congress in 1969, and the situation was resolved by the establishment of Opus Dei as a personal Prelature in 1982. And Opus Dei begins in each location with permission and encouragement of the local bishop. Indeed, upon Monsignor Escrivá's death in 1975, 1,600 bishops the world over petitioned the Holy See to open the cause of his beatification.

In addition, there are probably few men or women in the world who know better the work and mind of the Second Vatican Council fathers than Monsignor Alvaro del Portillo, the Prelate of Opus Dei. He was actively involved, with positions of responsibility granted by John XXIII, in the preparation of several of the council documents.

Allow me to say, too, that the portrait of John Paul II as presented in the articles will be recognized by any moderate observer as a caricature. John Paul has no more of a political agenda than did the founder of our faith, Jesus Christ. Wherever he goes, he preaches freedom and the dignity of the human person.

In this regard, I find it hard to believe that your articles failed even to mention his recent encyclical, "On Social Concern," or the positive impact for democracy and free elections his visits have had in recent years for millions of people in Poland, the Philippines, Haiti, Paraguay, Chile and elsewhere.

William A. Schmitt
Communications Director
Prelature of Opus Dei

LERNOUX REPLIES

Bogotá, Colombia

I did examine civil investigations of Opus Dei in Europe. Regarding the court decision in Germany, I did not rely on the publication in question, because there was no evidence to support some of its claims. I did not say that Opus Dei is a secret society—the issue in question in the civil investigations—but that it is secretive, or not open, about its methods and goals, and I think there is ample evidence of such behavior in the past and in certain current practices. Why, for example, does it not call its student centers Opus Dei centers instead of giving them other names? Why is it not open about its recruiting methods, as are other Catholic organizations? Why is Opus Dei's membership not a matter of public record? And why is Opus not forthright about the obligations demanded of its members? During an interview with Opus Dei representatives at its New York City center, I repeatedly tried to obtain a clarification of why young recruits are not encouraged to tell their parents of their membership in Opus Dei, but all I could get was an analogy with going to confession: "Priests don't advertise who comes to confession." "It might be a better idea to keep it [membership] to yourself," said the Opus Dei priest present at the interview, "although I wouldn't order you to keep quiet."

Notwithstanding Schmitt's claim, there is a clear bias in Opus Dei publications in favor of the political right, and many of its members belong to that side of the political spectrum. I did not say that Opus was an economic enterprise or that members were conspirators in the coup against Allende. The evidence does show, however, that Opus Dei members and sympathizers supported the coup.

Opus Dei members are supposedly free in secular matters, but as I pointed out in my April 10 article, there is a flaw in the claim: Through weekly confession, "heart-to-heart" talks and other contacts, members receive instruction on every aspect of their lives, and this inevitably affects their behavior in the secular world—not always positively, as is shown by the scandals arising from the behavior of José María Ruíz Mateos, a prominent Opus Dei member and former head of the Spanish conglomerate Rumasa, which was expropriated by the Spanish government because of Ruíz Mateos's illegal financial dealings.

I question the claim that the vast majority of Opus Dei's members are working-class people. Working most are, but my research on three continents shows that Opus Dei institutions usually deal with the middle and upper-middle classes and are located in affluent neighborhoods. The claim of "deficient reporting and unsubstantiated generalizations" cannot be answered without specific criticism and is itself an example of "unsubstantiated generalizations."

Monsignor Escrivá is *not* widely recognized as a precursor of the Second Vatican Council, as anyone familiar with the history and writings of the council can attest. My article stated that Opus Dei was founded in Spain in 1928 but gained ascendancy during the Franco regime, of which there is ample evidence. That various popes visited Opus Dei or encouraged the establishment of a school for workers does not mean that they approved of its ambition to become a church within the church, else why did they not approve Opus's petition to become an international prelature?

Just because Opus Dei has universities in Third World countries does not mean that poor people can afford to attend them, as is clear from the student enrollment at the university in Bogotá. I did not say that Opus operated television or radio stations or newspapers but that its members did. Again, we come up against the dilemma of members who are free to form opinions and decisions

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EDITORIALS.

Time Is Money

We have received the following letter from J. Richard Munro, chair of Time Inc., in response to our recent offer to buy his company ["Let's Do a Deal," The Nation, *July 3]:*

Dear Mr. Navasky: I've always regretted that Calvin Trillin decided to leave *Time*. I wish there were an easier way to get him back than to accept your courtly offer to act as a white knight. In any case, please tell Mr. Trillin that should he reconsider, we would be willing to discuss a salary boost into the high four figures.

As to your proposal: any enterprise that has weathered 125 years of financial losses deserves respect, if not emulation. *The Nation*'s offer will be considered by our Board with all the seriousness it deserves, and although I'm sure some will find it intriguing, my guess is that it will be turned down.

The prime reason, I suspect, will be that we don't need any liberator to manumit our "corporate slaves" because

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we've never had any. Mr. Luce may have been wrong on China (although recent events remind us once more that the Communists were never the high-minded "agrarian reformers" some wanted to believe they were), but he was exceedingly good to his employees. Right from the start, the company he helped found was stamped with his rock-ribbed faith in the dignity of work, the propriety of adequate reward and the necessity of creative freedom and journalistic independence. As a result, we've always had a full supply of the country's most talented people, the great majority of whom have been eager to spend their entire careers here. (Alas, Mr. Trillin was not among them.)

I hope that if the Board rejects your proposal, you will not be discouraged. I'm sure there must be many other corporations that could use your help, and I know the country needs independent editorial voices like *The Nation*'s.

If it's any consolation, I liked your offer better than the one made by Engulf & Devour.

Again, thanks for thinking of us.

Sincerely,
J. Richard Munro

Dear Mr. Munro: We are pleased to note that, even as you turned down Paramount's hostile offer of $200 a share, you have agreed to put to your board *The Nation*'s friendly offer to buy Time Inc. with a loan taken out against your assets.

For the purposes of clarification, however, I should mention that when we speak of "freeing the corporate slaves" we do not intend to demean the "adequate reward," dignified working conditions, stock options, and other perks that Time Inc. may give its employees. Rather, our reference has to do with our plan to spin off your various corporate subsidiaries and give *Time*, *Fortune*, *Sports Illustrated* and the rest of your properties their independence.

All we ask is that you don't prejudge our case. You indicate that most Time employees are happy with their lot. If you are willing to poll them on whether they would prefer to be owned by Time-Warner or to be given their independence by *The Nation*, we are prepared to abide by the results.

You also ought to poll your shareholders. Whether or not our bid succeeds, they might want to adopt our proposed restructuring as a defensive measure. We presume to give you this advice only because we know that a number of those with great expertise in takeovers and leveraged buyouts are currently in prison or otherwise enjoined from advising you.

From the tone of your letter, we suspect that you don't take our offer seriously. If you have any doubts, read Ben Bagdikian's report in our June 12 issue, which should show how concerned we are about the growing concentration of media ownership. Or perhaps you doubt that we can come up with the funds. If so, we fear you badly underestimate the value of Time Inc. assets. Your magazine, book and cable TV properties are just the beginning. The original manuscript of Henry Luce's "American Century" speech alone must be worth millions; and *Time* copy blue-penciled by Whittaker Chambers, with his careful interpolations of the worldwide Communist conspiracy, also would bring a tidy sum. Finally, there is that important intangible, "good will," which admittedly *The Nation* doesn't enjoy a lot of on Wall Street, but you most certainly do.

We are sure that with your cooperation we can bring this takeover to a fruitful conclusion, and we look forward to inspecting your books.

Sincerely,
Victor Navasky

The Fed's Yo-yo

Some of the alchemists at the Federal Reserve Board have discovered a new philosopher's stone, a simple formula to stifle inflation by curbing the money supply. *The New York Times* was so enchanted by this development that it displayed the magic equation on page one, much as it might have heralded Einstein's link between energy and mass.

A closer look, however, shows that the Fed's discovery is an old friend, an identity proclaimed in 1911 by Irving Fisher, an economist at Yale University. PT, said Fisher, equals MV: the general level of prices (P) multiplied by the total number of transactions, or output (T) equals the volume of money (M) multiplied by its velocity (V), the speed with which money travels from hand to hand. Indisputably true and, alas, not very useful as a public policy guide, even when dressed up with asterisks and subscripts by the Fed.

Alan Greenspan, the Fed's chief, is a shrewd man; he would not push warmed-over Fisher except to make a case. Sure enough, he uses the old equation as an excuse to renew the Fed's role as chief inflation fighter and to squeeze money so that high unemployment will keep prices in check. To do this, Greenspan and his team ignore the inflation generated by large corporations that administer prices. The Fed also minimizes the effects of the oil cartel and catastrophes like global drought, all major sources of inflation in the 1970s.

The Fed's use of Fisher's equation, moreover, rides roughshod over experience. If M, or money, is the sole force controlling P, prices, then the central bankers must dismiss velocity, V. It never changes, they say, so ignore it. In the real world, however, people's desire to hold or spend money changes rapidly and unpredictably. A chart in the Fed's own analysis shows that V rises and dips like a yo-yo. The Fed's dismal failure to spot the sudden plunge in velocity in 1982 brought on a world crisis, forced Mexico and other countries to stop paying on their debt and compelled the central bank to reverse its Draconian tight-money course. The assumption of V as a constant is nonsense.

Even worse, the Fed, we are told, assumes that T (sometimes called Q), total output, will grow only 2.5 percent a year. This is nearly a third lower than the levels regularly reached before the 1973 oil shock. Growth at 2.5 percent now would strip the nation of about $50 billion a year in output and the jobs to produce it. If a low rate governs its policy, then the Fed must pursue a path of perpetual tight money with high interest rates—something pleasing to its banker clients and few others.

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The Fed's equation will no doubt find its rightful, marginal place in history. Meanwhile, someone should tell the central bank that Congress has not repealed its 1946 goal of high employment—although these days one could be forgiven for thinking otherwise. BERNARD D. NOSSITER

Bernard D. Nossiter is writing a book about the postwar economy, to be published by Harper & Row.

Earth Last!

Some fifty agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation—in helicopters, on horseback and on foot with bloodhounds—lit up the desert sky with flares and moved in on four environmentalists who, in the Arizona darkness, were about to cut the power line to a pumping plant along the Central Arizona Project, a massive and controversial irrigation canal staunchly opposed by conservationists. One of the four "monkeywrenchers," an F.B.I. undercover agent who called himself Mike Tait, abruptly vanished. Peg Millett of the Earth First! speakers bureau and two activists from Prescott, Mark Davis and Marc Baker, were taken into custody.

The next morning four Bureau agents invaded the Tucson home of Dave Foreman, the founder of Earth First!, and hauled him out of bed. He was charged with conspiracy to destroy an energy facility and is now free on $50,000 bond. Millett, Davis and Baker remain in jail, held without bail as "a threat to the community." At a press conference following the May 30 roundup, the F.B.I. asserted that the "eco-terrorists" also were plotting to cut power lines at Arizona's Palo Verde and California's Diablo Canyon nuclear power plants, and Colorado's Rocky Flats weapons plant. The government clearly is casting a wide conspiracy net.

Earth First! has not been directly named, but at least fifteen people in several states—many with ties to its international organization—have been subpoenaed by a Federal grand jury in Phoenix that is hearing evidence about the so-called Evan Mecham Eco-Terrorist International Conspiracy. (Mecham is the right-wing Arizona Governor who was impeached last year; the group embraces the definition of its acronym, Emetic: "having power to induce vomiting.")

Gerry Spence, an attorney best known for having won a $10.5 million judgment against Kerr-McGee in the Karen Silkwood case ten years ago, is defending Foreman pro bono. The Jackson, Wyoming, lawyer is outraged at the prosecution's handling of the case, which he believes "opens the door to the political persecution of people who raise their voices against mainstream America." The F.B.I. and U.S. Attorney's office maintained at the initial bail hearing that cutting incoming cables at nuclear facilities could force backup systems to take over and, if they malfunctioned, cause a meltdown. Nuclear experts consider this unlikely in any event, but the cross-examination revealed that F.B.I. reports said nothing about any plans to halt incoming power; only outgoing lines were allegedly targeted, scarcely posing the possibility of a meltdown. Undercover agent Mike Tait, who supplied much of the evidence, has not appeared during the proceedings. Thus, Spence says, the testimony of F.B.I. case agent Lori Bailey was not only misleading but was based on hearsay.

It is not surprising that the F.B.I. would take an interest in Earth First! Since its formation in 1980 the organization has become, next to Greenpeace, the fastest-growing of the environmental movement's "direct action" groups. Under a banner of "No Compromise in Defense of Mother Earth," members have chained themselves to endangered redwoods, blocked bulldozers with their bodies, pulled up survey stakes and occasionally "decommissioned" heavy machinery. Foreman's self-published book, *Ecodefense: A Field Guide to Monkeywrenching*, has become an underground best seller.

The real question is whether the F.B.I. sought to entrap Earth Firsters. As the organization tells the story in a special edition of its *Earth First! The Radical Environmental Journal*, Tait first came around in January 1988, presenting himself as a friendly, quiet "redneck for wilderness" with an interest in radical action. He dined at Foreman's house, took Millett dancing, attended the Earth First! annual Round River Rendezvous in Washington state and later joined in wilderness actions. Eventually, he began pushing for a "hit" on the nuclear industry, seeking, the journal charges, to entrap members of the group. The F.B.I. admits that Tait did join Davis and Millett in plotting the nuclear-disabling scheme. Earth First! says that Tait also asked several of its Tucson people to put him in touch with monkeywrenchers in other states and, when plans went ahead to cut the power line at the Central Arizona Project, tried to persuade the group to hold out for an assault on a nuclear facility.

Foreman, according to government testimony, was privy to conversations about targeting the nuclear facilities, but disapproved of the alleged plans; he was nevertheless charged with conspiracy on the basis of having donated $580 to Mark Davis. By comparison, Spence argues, "nobody who contributed millions to the *contras*, money they knew would be used illegally, was prosecuted. What is this if not selective prosecution, which seems to me to foreshadow a totalitarian state?" Indeed, according to the Earth First! journal, it was the F.B.I.'s Tait who arranged last March for Davis to get some money from Foreman.

Millett, Baker and Davis face several counts, from conspiracy to destroy an energy facility and government property to hindering interstate commerce, and could each receive thirty-five years in prison and $80,000 in fines. Foreman, whom Assistant U.S. Attorney Roger Dokken has called "the financier, the leader, sort of the guru to get all this going," could be given a five-year sentence and a $10,000 fine. Spence compares the case's significance to the Scopes evolution trial of 1925, "because these people are fighting the basic power structure of this country, which claims the right and license to destroy the air, waters and forests for profit. The real eco-terrorism is being committed every day by corporate America." DICK RUSSELL

Dick Russell is a freelance writer who specializes in environmental subjects.

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MINORITY REPORT.

CHRISTOPHER HITCHENS

Barbara Honegger's book, *October Surprise*, is a classic demonstration of how not to write about that nagging problem of our time, criminal covert activity among the governing elite. Those who have had a chance to review the evidence will know by now that there is an excellent prima facie case for believing that the Reagan-Bush 1980 election team attempted to derail President Carter's negotiations for the return of the American hostages from Iran. They will see the logic of the derailment in a context that has since become evident: the secret supply of arms to the Khomeini regime. They will appreciate that the tempo of later events makes sense if a promise to this effect had been made early on. They will also grasp the reason for the exceptional feebleness of executive and Congressional "investigations" of Iran/*contra* skullduggery—feebleness now exposed by a flow of "mislaid" documents whose release would have made a difference only at the time. The very haste of the cover-up was an index of desperation. If the original sin of the Reagan-Bush regime had ever become public, something more than a constitutional spasm would have resulted. There would have been a Shakespearean crisis of legitimacy in the state. Apparently, or so my betters tell me, we're not ready for that.

How does Honegger approach this grave matter? She begins:

> During my nearly four years as a political appointee in the Reagan-Bush national campaign, transition team, White House, and Department of Justice, I grew not only to like, but to love Ronald Reagan as an individual. . . . I believed then, *as I do now*, that he was the right personality at the right time, needed to heal the nation. [Emphasis added.]

If I was embarking on something as weighty as Honegger's attempt to convince us all of the existence of high treason, I might not have begun with the admission that I was an airhead who was ready to believe any damn thing. Nor would I have gone on, a few pages later, to say this:

> When a theory explains so many acknowledged and otherwise inexplicable facts, it deserves to be classed as a fact itself.

This is just what is *not* meant by the usefulness of a theory. As I myself modestly put it, in a column on the October Surprise [see "Minority Report," July 4/11, 1987], a theory that fits all the known facts usually has some merit, but it does need to be tested. How can it be tested by someone who has no discriminating faculty in reviewing the evidence? In an epilogue to this undigested heap of a book, Honegger lists people connected with the scandal who have since died. The list includes William Casey, whose death was perhaps opportune but not mysterious, and the arms dealer Cyrus Hashemi, about whose death I *would* like to know more. It also includes a number of people whose connection to the story is barely tangential. And it contains the following entry:

> • DEAD: ABBIE HOFFMAN, social activist, who was found dead in his home on April 12, 1989. Press reports of Hoffman's death noted that he had been depressed about an automobile accident, which had occurred some months before. This accident happened just before Mr. Hoffman was to deliver his manuscript entitled "An Election Held Hostage" to *Playboy* magazine's offices in Chicago in the summer of 1988.

How cunning of the invisible government to leave only Barbara Honegger alive to promote her book. By her own standard, she must be an agent of influence for the grand conspiracy. Come to think of it . . . but *naah*.

To the paranoid mind all things are connected. I have often mocked those whose world view is so cautious that they no longer believe in anything but coincidence. But this is ridiculous:

> According to senior White House correspondent Sarah McClendon, the Secret Service agents who accompanied President Reagan as he approached his waiting limousine outside the Washington Hilton Hotel on the morning of March 30, 1981, were not in their usual tight formation around the commander-in-chief.

Perhaps with her eyes still dimmed by an old love, Honegger infers that this unremarkable observation helps prove an Iranian connection to John Hinckley's attempted assassination of Ronald Reagan.

Or there is this, offered with suggestive menace as an explanation for Robert McFarlane's overdose of Valium the night before he was to testify to the Tower commission:

> Given that press reports at the time noted that taking Valium is a notoriously unsuccessful way of committing suicide, it is interesting that CIA Director William Casey later boasted that a lie detector could be fooled "with Valium and a few tricks."

Except that McFarlane wasn't going to take a lie-detector test. He was about to testify before his old employer and crony, whose commission screened out only those people who were prepared to tell the truth. The end result of paranoia here is that it makes the official self-invigilation look *better* than it actually was.

A key weasel word in published efforts of this kind is "reportedly." An innocuous word on the face of it, but one that always makes me put my hand on my wallet. This book employs "reportedly" as a kind of mantra. Cyrus Hashemi was "reportedly" the New York chief for Khomeini's secret police, Savama; the SATI Company of Switzerland "reportedly" dealt with top members of the notorious Italian secret society P-2; Richard Secord and Oliver North "reportedly" met with the Iranian Ambassador to Bonn in 1984. Well, did they or didn't they? I believe that those who wield power are implicitly capable of anything, which makes me even keener than the next person to be absolutely specific and certain about what they did this time or that time.

Intended perhaps to be definitive and hard-nosed, this book is diffuse and naïve. It even advances the theory that the *mysteriously* dead Bill Casey, just before his turn came to testify and just before his brain seizure, "told his long time friend and personal counsel that he had decided to tell everything he knew." If you believe that. . . .

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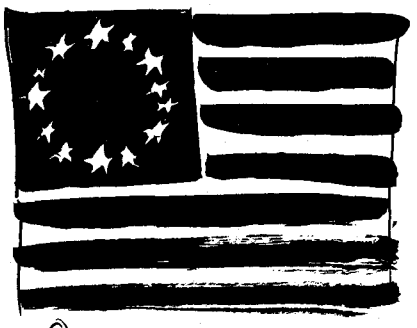
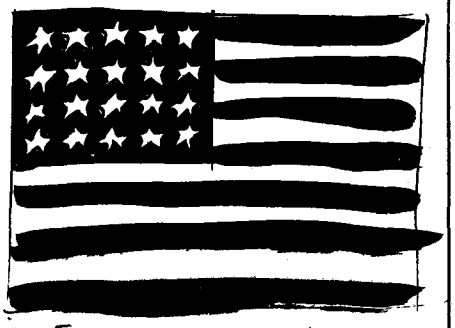
Fireworks Coming

EDWARD SOREL

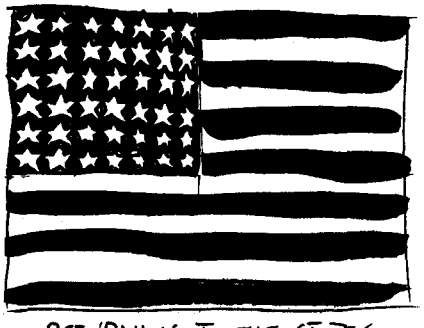


ONCE FREE OF ENGLAND'S OPPRESSIVE REGULATIONS, THE COLONISTS WASTED NO TIME IN BRINGING MORE AND MORE SLAVES INTO AMERICA.

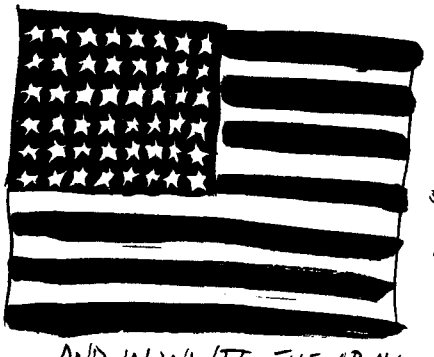
THEN, WITH GOOD OLD AMERICAN "KNOW-HOW" THEY BROKE ALL TREATIES WITH THE INDIANS AND BEGAN PUSHING THEM FURTHER AND FURTHER WEST.



THE INDIANS THAT WEREN'T KILLED WERE THEN IMPRISONED ON RESERVATIONS, LEAVING THE ARMY FREE TO USE ITS GUNS ON MEXICANS, FILIPINOS, AND NICARAGUANS.



RETURNING TO THE STATES, THE ARMY THEN CAME TO THE RESCUE OF HARD-WORKING INDUSTRIALISTS WHO WERE BEING THREATENED BY MONEY-MAD STRIKERS.

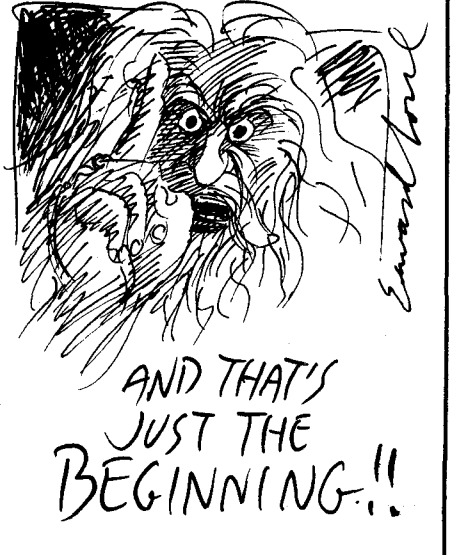


AND IN WWII, THE ARMY SHOWED THE RUSSIANS WHO WAS BOSS BY DROPPING ATOMIC BOMBS ON HIROSHIMA AND NAGASAKI.

NU? WHAT CAN YOU DO? EVERY SUPER-POWER DOES THINGS THEY DON'T BRAG ABOUT. I TRY TO BE AS UNDERSTANDING AS I CAN.

BUT WHEN THEY CHANGED THEIR PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO INCLUDE THE LINE "ONE NATION UNDER GOD", I REALLY GOT MAD!!

BLAMING ME FOR THEIR ATROCITIES! THAT'S WHEN I BEGAN SENDING THEM INFLATION, STAGFLATION, CRIME WAVES, AND IDIOT PRESIDENTS...



AND THAT'S JUST THE BEGINNING!!

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ARTICLES.

LABOR PUSHES TOWARD 1992

A Social Charter For the E.C.?

HILARY WAINWRIGHT

The sounds of class conflict are beginning to rumble through the European Community as its twelve member states prepare to create an integrated market by 1992. Removal of protectionist measures and cumbersome customs regulations will create the lucrative prospect of 320 million consumers, larger than the domestic markets of the United States or Japan. Anticipating an economic boom, corporations are especially eager to exploit the large gap in wage rates and working conditions between the better-organized northern European countries and the recently industrialized southern states. But the Brussels bureaucracy of the E.C. is coming under pressure from West Germany, Italy and Denmark—countries whose unions remain relatively strong—to protect hard-won wage rates, employment conditions and social benefits from erosion by footloose capital. I.G. Metall, the West German metalworkers' union, has been at the forefront of this resistance. With 2.6 million workers, encompassing the steel, auto, shipbuilding, machine tool, electrical and engineering industries, it is the largest union in Western Europe.

A tentative response to labor's pressure was made last fall by Jacques Delors, the European Commission's socialist president, backed by Vasso Papandreou, its socialist Commissioner of Social Affairs. Delors called on the E.C. to enact a "social charter" that would mandate Europewide minimum standards of employment protection, workplace health and safety, unemployment benefits, pensions and social security. In addition, he spoke vaguely about insuring a commitment to industrial democracy. Though Delors's charter exists only as a proposal at present, it quickly provoked the opposition of British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, Europe's leading proponent of free-market orthodoxy. "We have not worked all these years to free Britain from the paralysis of socialism," she declared last fall, "only to see it creep through the back door of central control and bureaucracy from Brussels." In contrast, the head of I.G. Metall, Franz Steinkuehler, has sought to push Delors further. "We need minimum social levels, which will improve the position of people in Europe in general, without giving up what we have achieved in our own country," he says. Steinkuehler has been busy encouraging European unions to coordinate their lobbying for enactment of the charter.

Among the staunchest supporters of the single European market is the European Round Table, a lobby of fifty or so major European corporations, including Plessey of Britain, Siemens of West Germany and Philips of Holland. By the early 1980s these corporate giants, all commercial success stories of the previous decade, were beginning to feel a little vulnerable: Technologically and commercially they were being overtaken by competitors from Japan and the United States. Only a continentwide (and in some areas, a standardized) market big enough to sustain their sales drives and satisfy their predatory desires could restore them to their former glory. With free-market economics in ascendancy across the political spectrum in Europe—in socialist Spain and Greece as well as conservative Britain—the proposal for the single market glided easily through Brussels's bureaucratic channels. In 1985, the top functionaries of the European Commission, the E.C.'s powerful executive arm, produced a White Paper containing several hundred detailed directives that set uniform standards for everything from carphone radio frequencies to machine tool design. Two years later, the plans were adopted by the E.C.'s Council of Ministers, on which each government has a representative. Members of the European Parliament nodded their assent; they could do little else, for although the 1992 plan may mean a greater role for this body, its power at present is largely limited to approving the E.C.'s annual budget.

In auto and machine tool factories, at chemical and construction sites and in union headquarters across Europe, the proposal for a unified market has not been given so bland a reception. In West Germany, France and Italy, for instance, trade unionists have just been through a decade of resisting job losses from home-grown industrial restructuring. In the better-organized sectors, they have won important commitments to shorter working hours and employment protection legislation. Leaving companies free to wander Europe for the cheapest labor and the least restrictive conditions could undermine these gains. With 1992 in mind, the chair of the German Industry and Trade Assembly, Hans Peter Stihl, made the point explicitly: "We can no longer allow ourselves the goal of a thirty-five-hour week—otherwise, first investment capital and then skilled workers will move away, over our borders." That is the employers' view. The alternative for labor is to help spread conditions like the thirty-five-hour week and high unemployment benefits across national borders, and thereby eliminate the incentive to shift production from state to state.

The achievement of the German trade unions that I.G. Metall is most keen to get into an E.C. directive is the one that most angers Thatcher: worker consultation in corporate decisions. "It goes back to Marxism, to the class struggle," she snorts. In fact, *Mitbestimmung*—codetermination—has its origins in the Anglo-American occupa-

Hilary Wainwright is a fellow of the Transnational Institute in Amsterdam, the European associate of the Washington-based Institute for Policy Studies. Her latest book, Labor: A Tale of Two Parties *(Random House), is on the British Labor Party.*

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tion of West Germany after the war. Today, West German unions have seats on the boards of virtually every industrial company in the country.

It was the British occupation, paradoxically, that fostered another of I.G. Metall's strengths: its organization on an industrywide basis rather than on the craft basis of most British unions or the religious and political bases of most Continental unions. The Germans adopted the industrywide model on the advice of the British Trade Union Congress, which had been asked by the British government to help set up a trade union movement free of the unofficial structures that were the bane of British employers' and trade union leaders' lives.

As the work force in the various segments of the metalworking industry has become more diverse—with more part-time women and low-paid migrant workers, and more well-paid technical workers—I.G. Metall has faced major problems of direction. This has forced the union to do some unusual but vital strategic thinking. Which are the issues that will unite our members? the union's leaders have to ask themselves. In 1984, in the face of high unemployment, the answer to that question led I.G. Metall to embark on a seven-week strike for a thirty-five-hour work week. The union won an immediate reduction to a thirty-eight-and-a-half-hour week without making any concessions on wages, job speedups or flexible work hours. Since then, the need to appeal to its disparate membership has led the union to focus on the quality of German society and its relations with the rest of the world. In contrast to most of Europe's unions, I.G. Metall's membership has grown since the mid-1970s, from 2.5 million to 2.6 million. Claus Mehrens, head of the union's Department for Fundamental Problems, says one reason for the expansion is that "we show we are concerned with the wider problems of society—the problems of the environment, peace and the Third World."

For example, instead of arguing for growth driven by competitive accumulation, Steinkuehler seeks "a new, qualitative approach to growth, which must put social and ecological necessities on an equal footing." I.G. Metall works actively with churches, the Green Party, the Social Democrats and community groups across Germany to campaign against threats to the environment and lobby on other quality-of-life issues. And for the last several years, the union has been organizing direct contacts with workers in subsidiaries of German companies in South Africa, leading to a regular exchange of information and to pressure from German workers in support of the black workers' struggle.

It is this social emphasis and commitment to improving the quality of working life, rather than appeals to direct material gains, that form the basis of the union's recruitment campaign among white-collar workers. And many office and technical employees are, for the first time, joining the metalworkers. Some union activists even see the seeds of a new kind of trade unionism in the emphasis on social priorities. In the past, social issues had been left to the unions' political ally, the Social Democratic Party. Helmuth Schauer, former leader of the German S.D.S.—the socialist student movement—and now a leading official in I.G. Metall's headquarters in Frankfurt, says, "We are building a social movement as well as a union."

Indeed, an industrial trade union has special potential as the basis for a movement for social change. Its members have the power to influence the direction of production; they have the knowledge to redirect technology. Steinkuehler's approach to new technology is sophisticated: He embraces neither the welcoming attitude of "business unions" concerned only to bargain over the rewards, nor the defensive and, in the end, shortsighted rejectionism of many craft unions. I.G. Metall's policy statements on technology reflect on the social ramifications of technological decisions, exposing the choices and values that lie behind their supposedly neutral appearance. "Technological progress is not tantamount to social progress. . . . Its development cannot be dissociated from the industrial, political and military framework within which it is being researched, planned and applied. . . . Its application in the interest of workers implies a political choice and social controls." Not an original

DRAWINGS BY ELLEN WEINSTEIN

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statement, perhaps, but strong stuff coming from the largest industrial union in Europe. And it is more than just words.

At the local level, if jobs are under threat, the union encourages its representatives to bargain for a shift into new products, to enhance the environment, for example, or improve public transport. The metalworkers have taken a lead in establishing technology centers in every major industrial city, where workers can get advice in formulating a response to or initiative on new technology. Nationally, the union is drawing up its own strategies for various industrial sectors, including a conversion plan for the arms industry.

Not every faction of the metalworkers is straining to help the union become a social movement. I.G. Metall is still a union in transition from the postwar years of partnership, when it joined the collaborative effort behind the German "economic miracle," to the present revival of class consciousness, as its members realize that they are not getting their fair share of benefits. Many of those whose trade union habits were formed during the partnership years are still in powerful local positions or leading the work councils that were the bedrock of *Mitbestimmung*. "We are practicing new ideas with an old organization," remarked Dietrich Schultz, coordinator of the union's technology center in West Berlin, with a note of frustration in his voice. The pace of change is being set by an informal alliance of the metalworkers' Frankfurt-based leadership and a new generation of local and regional officials. This alliance and Steinkuehler's leadership are largely products of the long strike for the thirty-five-hour work week.

The ambitions have been tempered somewhat since the strike. It is the gains made then that would be most vulnerable in a Thatcher-style free European market—that is, one without social protections. Transnational corporations in Germany are already using their ability to transfer work to factories where union organization is weak and to press local work councils to accept the instituting of weekend shifts. General Motors, for instance, has already succeeded in winning provisional agreement to such a deal from the work council at the Opel plant in Kaiserslautern.

I.G. Metall has responded to these developments by launching a populist-style political campaign. "The struggle over the free weekend is a social one," argues Klaus Lange, a national union official responsible for strategy over working time. "The destruction of the free weekend fragments society. I go bicycle racing at the weekend; like many hobbies, this needs a large group of people. This kind of group activity could soon become impossible if we don't defend the weekend." The union is also making approaches of a pragmatic kind to establish Europewide negotiations with transnational corporations, with the long-term aim of spreading the standards achieved by the best-organized workplaces to those least organized.

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But, as Steinkuehler reflects, "Transnational organizing is difficult." In many unions, including at times I.G. Metall, there has been a tradition of hostility and suspicion toward contact among representatives of different factories of the same company—partly because such efforts shift power away from the union hierarchy. Cold war attitudes still divide Communist unions from others. And of course there is hostility from management. "Be wary of cross-border consultations between unions," warned a leading personnel consultant at a business seminar on the single European market. "It may build up connections that can work against you in the future." I.G. Metall, however, has persevered because it has a lot to lose in 1992. Sometimes it organizes directly, union to union. For instance, Steinkuehler has directly approached the Engineering Union in Britain, hoping to coordinate the two unions' negotiating strategies with European companies. I.G. Metall has also been active in organizing continentwide meetings of trade unionists facing a common corporate management—whether General Motors, Ford or the French company Thompson Grande Public. And, finally, it is working to breathe life into the subcommittees of the European Trade Union Congress.

Although the European Trade Union Congress cannot match the pro-business European Round Table's influence with the E.C., the integrated market is coming at a time when unions in several European countries are renewing their strength, increasing their memberships and sharpening their strategies. I.G. Metall is the clearest example. In Italy, too, the main union federations are beginning to grow again, even in newer high-tech sectors, after a sharp decline; they are more united and their demands less defensive. There have been several general strikes in Italy in the past five years, over issues such as social spending and labor's rights to information and consultation in company decisions. Add to this the recent strikes in Spain—where only 16 percent of the working population is unionized—to bring the pension provisions of Spanish employers up to the highest standards of those in the E.C. Clearly, corporate management will not be the only force trying to exploit the economic inequalities that will become visible as Europe pulls down its borders.

The social conflict in Western Europe is depicted in headlines as "La Thatcher" and the free marketeers versus "Frère Jacques" and the social chartists. But, at the E.C. summit meeting in Madrid at the end of June, the loud declarations of these protagonists were already turning into cautious compromises to enable the economic move toward 1992 to proceed unhindered by what the London *Economist* calls "the distraction" of the social dimension. Summits of European leaders, however, will not be able to cast aside "the distraction" so easily. For Delors's promise of social rights gives legitimacy and confidence to trade union leaders like Steinkuehler and strikers like those in Italy and Spain. There are even signs of a renewed stroppiness among workers in Britain. The large protest vote in the recent European Parliament elections against conservative parties, including Thatcher's, indicates that workers in Europe are also beginning to reassert themselves politically [see Daniel Singer,

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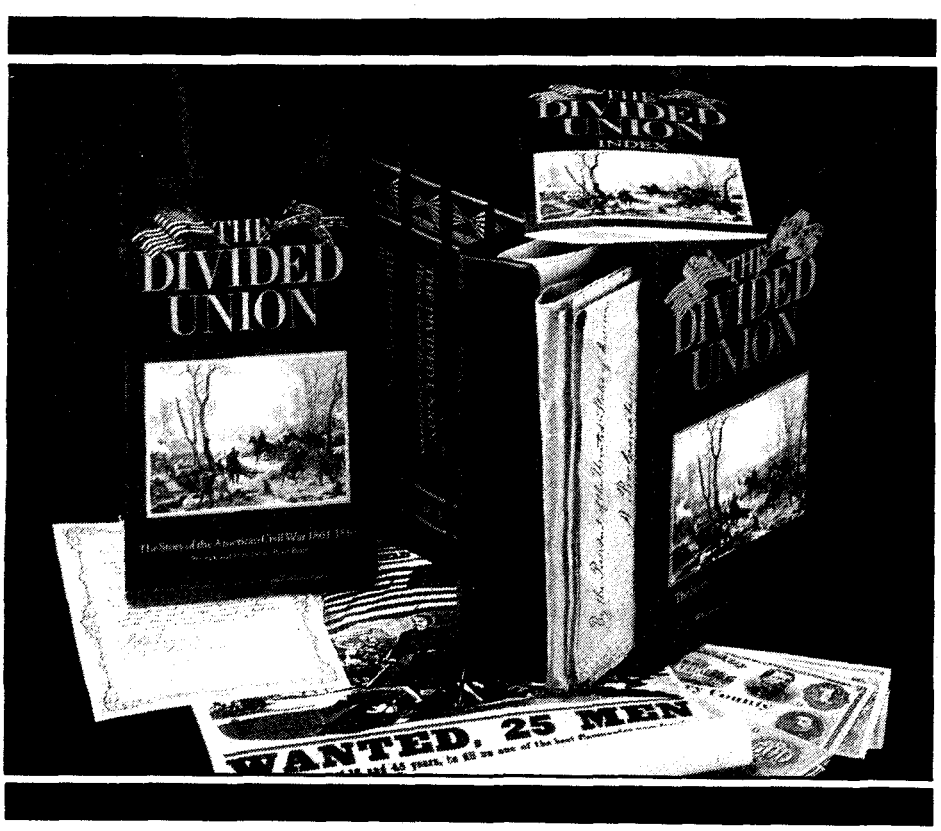

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"Gains and Losses," July 10]. Though 1992 may well succeed in uniting European markets, it is clear that it will also deepen divisions of class and politics. □

THE ART OF CAPITOL HILL

Shilling in The Senate

DAVID CORN

The amendment concerned the testing of prospective pesticides, and the language seemed altogether innocuous. "Whenever tests . . . are required by more than one state or federal agency, such tests . . . shall be coordinated and synchronized among the agencies so as to avoid unnecessary repetition and redundancy." Who could be in favor of unnecessary redundancy?

But Senator Rudy Boschwitz, who was pushing the amendment to the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act at a session of the Senate Agriculture Committee last year, was not acting solely in the name of efficiency. Boschwitz was shilling for a very special interest: small manufacturers of pesticides. And he was doing so in the fashion that occurs in Congress daily: maneuvering at a "mark-up," the underreported committee meetings where legislation gets modified.

North Carolina's Jesse Helms and tobacco, Connecticut's Christopher Dodd and insurance, West Virginia's Robert Byrd and coal—these are well-known partnerships. But many less visible joint enterprises exist in both houses of Congress, engaged in by both liberals and conservatives. I have selected Boschwitz and three of his colleagues—Bennett Johnston, Orrin Hatch and Alan Cranston—as four not-too-extraordinary examples of how the system operates. They may not necessarily be the worst offenders; such an honor is difficult to award, given the number of contenders. These are just tales of business as usual, which is what makes them alarming.

Boschwitz claimed his pesticide amendment would help small firms develop new products and save consumers from bearing the "inordinate costs," via higher prices, of too much product testing. But to those familiar with pesticide law the amendment had another intent: to subvert the efforts of individual states that write pesticide regulations stiffer than the Federal requirements. Most of the committee saw through Boschwitz. His fellow Republican Pete Wilson put it bluntly: "I think [the amendment] is frankly an effort to achieve a uniformity [of pesticide testing] for the convenience of manufacturers." In fact, prior to the session, the amendment had been widely referred to as the "C.S.M.A. amendment," after the Chemical Specialties Manufacturers Association, a trade group representing firms that manufacture home-use pesticides.

Some C.S.M.A. members are based in Minnesota, the state Boschwitz represents. Would that justify supporting a bill that could weaken pesticide regulation nationwide? The *Minneapolis Star Tribune* didn't see a home-state interest and chastised Boschwitz for pushing the amendment. But there was another local connection. A key lobbyist for the provision was Jon Grunseth, vice president of the Minneapolis-based Economics Laboratory, which owns ChemLawn and is part of C.S.M.A. Grunseth, whose wife is a major Republican fund-raiser in Minnesota, is himself a player in Republican politics and is considering running for governor. Moreover, the political action committees of C.S.M.A. members gave Boschwitz at least $30,000 when he ran for re-election in 1984.

At the end of the debate on the amendment, when it became clear that Boschwitz could not persuade a majority of the committee, C.S.M.A. representatives were willing to throw in the towel, according to Janet Hathaway, an attorney for the Natural Resources Defense Council, who was at the session. But Boschwitz, to the surprise of some present, pressed for a vote. "C.S.M.A. didn't communicate [its willingness to surrender] to Boschwitz," Hathaway recalls. "It's a little embarrassing to pass a note to the Senator saying, 'C.S.M.A. says to give up.'" The committee rejected his amendment, 14 to 4.

On March 24, Bennett Johnston, the powerful chair of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, must have realized that a pet project of his was sunk. That was the day that the Exxon Valdez struck a reef and dumped 10 million gallons of crude oil into Prince William Sound. Only nine days earlier, Johnston, a Louisiana Democrat, had carefully navigated through his committee a bill to open the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in Alaska to oil and gas drilling.

For the past two years, Johnston has tried to deliver a piece of the wildlife refuge, the nation's sole unspoiled Arctic ecosystem, to the oil industry. But Johnston could not sell the measure to his fellow Democrats. When the committee voted on his bill in February 1988, eight of the ten Democrats refused to support the chair. The bill, however, squeaked out of committee on an 11-to-8 vote; but it didn't move on the Senate floor. This year it was a top priority of Johnston, until the oil spill. He then deep-sixed the measure, explaining it would be "politically foolish" to push it.

Johnston's affection for big energy goes well beyond oil. In 1986 he successfully pushed a bill that favored privately owned utilities over public utilities in Federal licensing involving hydroelectric power. Last year he fought back proposed legislation that would make contractors at Department of Energy–owned nuclear facilities—including General Electric, Rockwell and Westinghouse—liable for accidents caused by their own gross negligence. Johnston has now revived a bill that would save the nuclear industry billions of dollars.

In 1969 the government began enriching uranium for the burgeoning commercial nuclear power industry. The 1954 Atomic Energy Act requires the Department of Energy to

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price its enrichment services so that it recovers the program's cost. But the General Accounting Office reported in 1987 that the D.O.E., as of 1986, had not recovered $8.8 billion; that sum may now have risen to more than $10 billion. The utilities claim this debt is solely the result of accounting trickery. Last year, Johnston was one of the proponents of a measure that would restructure the uranium industry and set the amount of unrecovered costs at about $364 million, a figure acceptable to the utilities. In 1988 he succeeded in ushering the bill through the Senate but it died in the House.

On a complex issue such as this, there may be room for honest disagreement; but the room would have to be quite large to accommodate the range between $364 million and $10 billion. Johnston argues that maintaining a healthy nuclear industry is in the national interest. It certainly is in his interest. His finance reports overflow with money from a host of energy concerns. When he was running for re-election in 1983 and 1984, he received more than $121,000 from energy PACs and at least $84,000 from individuals who work in the business. Last year, he earned $8,000 in honorariums from G.E., Chevron and electric utilities.

Johnston has taken special-interest campaign financing to creative heights via his own Pelican PAC, established in 1987 and named after the Louisiana state bird. As detailed by *Congressional Quarterly*, this PAC has been managed by a small group of former Johnston aides who now lobby for big energy interests. Many of its funds came from individuals who work for energy companies, according to Federal Election Commission records. Two of the prime movers behind Pelican, both former Johnston aides, are Robert Szabo, who has lobbied for electric utilities, the Uranium Producers of America and the corporation that owns the drilling rights in the Arctic refuge; and Charles McBride, who has lobbied for the American Nuclear Energy Council and nuclear utilites. Pelican's mission was to raise money that Johnston, then contending for the majority leader's job in the Senate, could funnel to the senatorial campaigns of other Democrats. Johnston doled out over $200,000 in 1987 and 1988, but his largesse failed to win him the votes he needed from his colleagues.

Asked about the propriety of his Pelican scheme, Johnston said, "I'm very much playing by the rules." He's right. By Washington rules, there is nothing wrong when a senator recruits aides turned lobbyists to hit up special interests—whose profits the senator can greatly affect—to finance an effort to obtain the top Senate leadership post.

Orrin Hatch is the ranking Republican on the Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee, which oversees health legislation. He is also the beneficiary of great wads of cash from health-related industry, whose interests frequently come before his committee. For example, in the years before Hatch's 1988 re-election he took in more than $30,000 from company officials and PACs of Eli Lilly, Bristol-Myers and Pfizer.

Last year the House passed the Medical Device Improvements Act, which was intended to better regulate such items as pacemakers, incubators and X-ray machines. The bill was the product of extensive negotiations between Congressional staff and the Health Industry Manufacturers Association, according to Congressional sources and Jerry Connor, a former lobbyist for H.I.M.A. Consumer advocates felt that the bill did not go far enough, but it did tighten a loophole that had allowed medical device manufacturers to escape Federal review of many new products.

Three medical device companies and H.I.M.A. members—Pfizer, Bristol-Myers and Eli Lilly—bolted and vowed to sink the bill in the Senate. They found an ally in Hatch. He and Representative John Dingell, chair of the House Energy and Commerce Committee, which had responsibility for the medical device bill, began negotiating. Hatch provided Dingell with a list of several proposed changes in the legislation, most of which appeared reasonable to the House side and did not seem, at first blush, to be linked to Pfizer, which had taken the lead in opposing the bill.

But Hatch's list included a measure that previously had been introduced on its own as a bill by Senator Howell Heflin and Representative Dan Glickman. This proposal would prevent foreign citizens from using U.S. courts to sue American manufacturers of defective products. Pfizer had a well-publicized and pressing interest in the measure due to trouble it had with its Bjork-Shiley heart valve. Between 1979 and 1986, 85,000 valves had been implanted in patients, about half of whom were foreigners; as of June 1988 the valve had been linked to 123 deaths. At that time at least forty foreign citizens were suing Pfizer in California.

The Pfizer bailout provision Hatch proposed adding to the medical device bill fell outside the scope of Dingell's committee, so that Dingell could not have attached it to the medical device bill whether he wanted to or not. Though Hatch failed to deliver this favor to Pfizer, he did succeed in

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blocking the medical device bill in the Senate, where it expired when Congress adjourned last year. A Hatch spokesperson maintains that the Senator was not acting at the behest of Pfizer but on behalf of a number of senators who had various objections to the House bill. But, according to a Congressional aide, Pfizer was boasting that Hatch had killed the bill for the company.

Hatch's labors might end up backfiring. This year the House is expected to start all over on a new medical devices bill. "The companies may regret what happened," Connor says, noting that the House might be tempted to pass a tougher measure. Hearings are planned for later this year. The word, says Connor, is that at least one Pfizer product will be featured prominently at the session.

On March 27, 1987, Senator Pete Domenici, a Republican from New Mexico, took to the Senate floor to offer Amendment 59 to the Competitive Equality Banking Act, a major piece of financial legislation. Domenici's measure was quite simple. It would limit the amount of junk bonds a state-chartered and federally insured savings and loan institution could hold in its portfolio. Domenici noted that limits already applied to federally chartered S&Ls and that it seemed unreasonable to allow state-chartered thrifts to engage in high-risk investment yet receive the same insurance. The amendment did not please junk-bond peddlers like Drexel Burnham, Lambert or the state-regulated S&Ls in California that hold a lot of these bonds; both forces lobbied against the provision.

Several senators spoke out against Domenici's amendment, among them Alan Cranston, the Democratic liberal from California. For Cranston, the majority whip and a member of the Banking Committee, this must have been a special moment. He was helping two of his good friends—the S&L industry and Drexel—at the same time. To Cranston's re-election campaign of 1986, Drexel executives and the firm's PAC contributed at least $42,800, and thrift industry PACs, $47,000. With Cranston and others in opposition, Domenici's endeavor failed.

If you're looking for senators who front for industry, one Federal Elections Commission official says, check out the Banking Committee. This is where the titanic forces of the U.S. economy do battle. Insurance interests oppose banks eager to get into the insurance field. The securities industry tries to keep banks from underwriting securities. Major financial firms seek to get a piece of banking. Thrifts vie for less regulation and greater powers. Each bloc has its champions. Cranston, according to former committee aides, usually does double time, helping both S&Ls and the financial services industry. Once, says a committee source, a Cranston aide submitted amendments to a banking bill without the Senator's having read them. They were put in at the request of a trade association of financial services firms.

Cranston consistently has fought efforts to strengthen the capital-reserve standards for S&Ls and pressed measures that would allow them to be more freewheeling. In 1987, in committee caucuses, he urged a lower recapitalization of the Federal Savings and Loan Insurance Corporation. This is what Speaker Jim Wright pushed in the House. Thrifts were not eager to see a large refinancing of the F.S.L.I.C. for several reasons: They would have to pay the tab; the money would be used to close down ailing S&Ls, an admission that the S&L industry faced a severe problem; and they realized that if only a small recapitalization at that stage was set up, it could lead to a taxpayer bailout down the road. Which it did.

"Alan Cranston is not playing a large role in the public interest on that committee," says Peggy Miller, a banking lobbyist for the Consumers Federation of America. As an example, she points to community reinvestment legislation, which she maintains should interest a liberal well known for his advocacy of housing programs. Miller complains that groups backing community reinvestment legislation, which would require banks to take into account local needs when they review their lending patterns, cannot get help from Cranston: "With the exception of housing, whenever we try to have an impact on the financial community we don't bother with him."

One of Cranston's more notorious actions occurred in April 1987. As reported in the *National Thrift News*, Cranston and four other Senators—Dennis DeConcini, John McCain, John Glenn and Donald Riegle Jr.—held a meeting with four representatives of the San Francisco Federal Home Loan Bank and urged the regulators to reappraise the real estate investments of a California-based thrift, Lincoln Savings and Loan. This was "an unprecedented display of Senatorial effort on behalf of a thrift," the publication observed. Last year, *The Detroit News* noted that Cranston had received $41,900 in campaign contributions from executives connected to the American Continental Corporation, the owner of Lincoln Savings. (Cranston's office, like those of Johnston and Boschwitz, did not respond to requests for interviews.)

Recently, Cranston was given the chance to relive his 1987 small victory on the issue of junk bonds and thrifts. In April, when the Senate passed the S&L bailout, the bill emerged with a provision that allows S&Ls to count as capital their investment in subsidiaries that hold junk bonds. Because the Banking Committee prepared much of the bill in secret, the author of this provision was never publicly identified. But Congressional sources told *The Washington Post* that Cranston was the culprit and that the bill's main beneficiary was a Beverly Hills S&L.

As long as members of Congress need to turn to well-heeled individuals, corporations, trade associations, labor unions and other special interests to finance their runs for office, the favors will fly and the taxpayer will pick up the tab. As long as they accept from the same gang honorariums (which are direct personal income) and free travel, motives will always be questioned. And as long as key legislative work goes on in secrecy, suspicion will be well justified. Take the case of Cranston's opposition to Domenici's Amendment 59. Senator William Proxmire, then chair of the Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs Committee, also opposed the measure. But Proxmire, who retired last year, did not accept PAC money and declined honorariums from

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any group with an interest in Banking Committee legislation. In fact, he spent only $145.10 in his last re-election bid.

The big lie on Capitol Hill is that the flow of money doesn't pervert the legislative process. The system has become so poisoned (and the public and news media so cynical) that most episodes of special-interest legislating no longer outrage anyone. In a year marked by scandal and greed on Capitol Hill, the need for reform is obvious. The time is long past to close off the financial tap and open the committee room doors. If there is no noticeable change in the way Congress does business, then we can return to the old ways. The money will always be there. □

RURAL SWEATSHOPS

Doing Home Work Down on the Farm

OSHA GRAY DAVIDSON

It is several hours past sundown when Sarah Johnson at last noses the John Deere tractor into a metal shed beside the barn, climbs stiffly down from the cab and heads for the house—a full day of fieldwork behind her. Barely visible in the distance to the south are two small bouncing arcs of light that mark her husband's progress as he continues to work the couple's 1,100-acre farm. After checking to see that her three teen-age children have eaten the dinner she left for them and are now finishing their schoolwork, the 42-year-old woman walks back out the door and across the dusty yard to a low wooden building opposite the barn. Inside, she snaps on a single overhead fluorescent light, sits down at a wooden bench and mentally punches in. At 10:30 P.M., she is beginning her "work day": assembling front-end suspension components for G.M. cars.

Sarah Johnson (not her real name), like some sixty other farmers—mostly women—in economically hard-hit western Iowa, will spend many such nights this summer, sliding grommets and washers onto long metal bolts, working up to fifty hours a week and earning $250 for her efforts.

Johnson's husband helps out when he can. When she falls behind, as often happens, and she must deliver her pickup load of assembled auto parts to the warehouse in nearby Guthrie Center by morning, the kids lug kitchen chairs out to the workshop and the family labors together well into the night. "The worst part," Johnson says, "is that the work is always there waiting for you. On Sundays. On holidays. It's there when you get up in the morning. And after you're through farming at night. There's just no turning it off. I'm sure they're taking advantage of us. I mean, *somebody* was getting paid a lot of money to do this in Detroit. But every-

Osha Gray Davidson is a writer living in Iowa City, Iowa. His book, The Rise of the Rural Ghetto, *will be published by the Free Press next year.*

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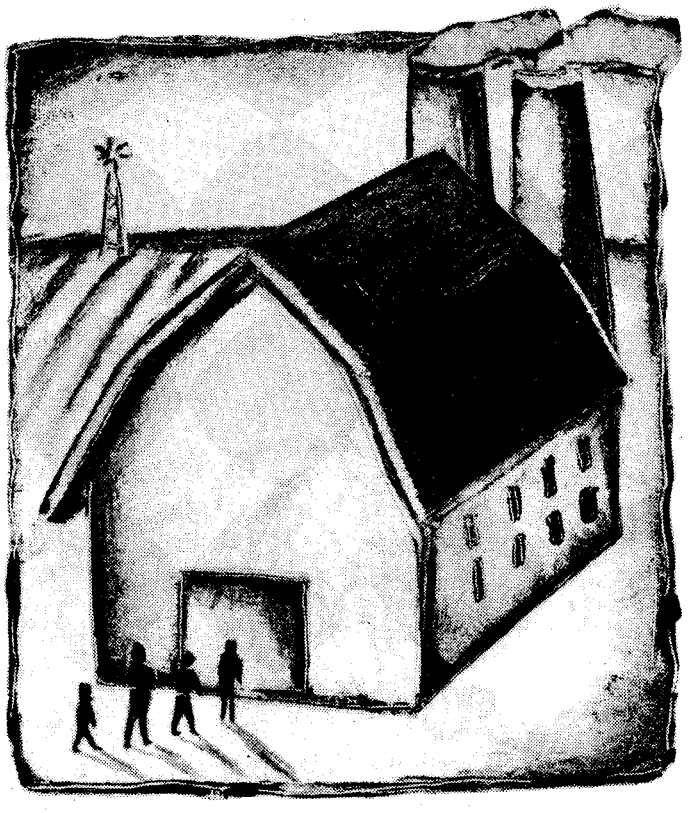
body does what they can to survive, and that's just what we're doing."

More and more women are finding that industrial home work—doing everything from embroidering chic jogging suits to assembling stuffed toys—is the only work around in the nation's depressed rural areas. Advocates of home work say that the growth of this industry is a boon for rural women. Home work, they maintain, allows for employee flexibility in balancing the demands of work and family, increases worker autonomy and protects the right of Americans to choose where they work.

But in fact, industrial home work is becoming to today's rural ghettos what sweatshops were to the immigrant tenements in the first half of this century: an opportunity to exploit a mostly female work force, one characterized by low wages, unsafe working conditions and little or no government regulation.

To prevent such abuses, the Roosevelt Administration banned most forms of industrial home work in 1942. But under the deregulation fervor of Ronald Reagan, the Labor Department began lifting the prohibitions, a process that continues apace under George Bush. In January, the department announced its intention to drop the only remaining home work ban, the one on women's apparel.

While debate over the legalization of home work has focused almost exclusively on its urban implications, rural women are in many ways just as vulnerable to exploitation as are immigrants in New York's garment district and Chinatown—areas notorious for home work abuses. Both groups share lives circumscribed by poverty. Indeed, rural Americans today are more likely to be living in poverty than residents of the nation's cities. The rural poverty rate (16.9 percent) is in fact just below the rate for the nation's blighted inner-city areas (18.6 percent), and for certain groups—African-Americans, Latinos, the elderly and families headed by single women—rural poverty rates are just as high as, or higher than, those of inner-city areas.



Because rural families are deeply attached to their communities and their land (which in many cases has been in the family for several generations), moving to a better labor market is not an attractive option. The result is a growing and increasingly desperate rural labor pool made up of people who are willing to work extremely long hours, often under hazardous conditions, for poverty wages. (Sarah Johnson's piecework earns her about $5.50 an hour, much more than what many industrial home workers earn. At Congressional hearings on the proposal to lift home work restrictions, several home workers testified that they earn between $1 and $3 an hour.)

Home work is also popular in rural America because women's roles there tend to be more narrowly defined and more rigidly enforced than in urban areas. The idea of a woman working for pay outside the home—especially if she has children—still meets with great opposition in heartland communities. Home work is seen as an acceptable way for these women to enter the paid labor market without violating social norms—that is, without asking men to share in the responsibility of child rearing. Home work thus serves to reinforce a gender-based division of labor that places an extra burden on women.

For manufacturers, there are many benefits to using home workers. By replacing factory workers with home workers, employers are able to eliminate many overhead costs. Hiring home workers also grants manufacturers greater flexibility in meeting market demands by allowing them to diminish or expand the workload as needed. The use of home workers also gives employers extra leverage in gaining concessions from union workers.

According to Carol Parsons, a former professor of urban and regional planning at the University of Iowa who is studying home work in selected Midwestern industries, the lifting of the ban on home work is just one part of a multifaceted breakdown of labor standards in America. "Home working," she says, "allows a manufacturer in St. Louis to say to the I.L.G.W.U. [International Ladies Garment Worker's Union]: 'O.K., you don't want to take a wage cut? Well, we've got fifty women in Iowa who'll work for $2 an hour.' It pits the legitimate interests of hard-pressed rural families to earn an income against the interests of urban workers to have the government protect their wages and working conditions. Home working divides groups that have common economic interests."

Because they are spread out across the countryside, rural home workers are extremely difficult for labor unions to organize. For the same reason, government enforcement of minimum wage and safety standards is lax at best. When the Labor Department lifted the ban on home work in the knitted outerwear industry in 1984, a new certification program required companies to keep detailed records on their home workers. The government hoped this experiment would show that it was possible to allow the widespread reinstitution of

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home work while preventing the traditional abuses. Yet despite a Labor Department study that found that 75 percent of the employers in the newly deregulated sector were guilty of wage and hour violations, the government forged ahead with its plan to lift the remaining home work restrictions.

Eileen Boris, assistant professor of history at Howard University and co-author of *Homework*, is skeptical of the government's promise to keep close tabs on the industry. "There are fewer compliance officers today than there were in 1980—despite a dramatic increase in the number of workplaces that the D.O.L. [Department of Labor] must monitor," she says. "And how can they talk about monitoring the industry when they don't even know how many people are doing home work?" The government's own estimates of the number of people employed in the traditional home work industries range from a low of 8,711 (the Census Bureau) to a high of 122,000 (the Bureau of Labor Statistics).

"The involvement of children in industrial home work [is] inevitable, if work is allowed by law to occur in the home," says Dr. Philip Landrigan, professor of community medicine and pediatrics at the Mount Sinai School of Medicine in New York City and past chair of the Committee on Environmental Hazards of the American Academy of Pediatrics. Allen Meier, Iowa Commissioner of Labor, voices a similar opinion. "Once you get a punch press or an industrial sewing machine in the house, how do you keep a 12-year-old away from it? Say he wants a bicycle. You let him work on the machine for maybe a couple of hours each weekend, to earn money for the bike. After a while, the kid is bound to think, 'Hey, if I work every night, all night for a week, I'll get the bike right away.' And unless a kid shows up in school with some fingers missing someday, no one is going to ever know that they're doing industrial home work."

Despite these criticisms, supporters claim that home work provides jobs and dollars to a rural economy desperately in need of both. Denying rural women the right to work at home, they say, is a crime. "For many, that [home work] paycheck puts food on the table and may well be the bit of income that keeps the family afloat on the farm," says Representative Jim Lightfoot of Iowa.

These boosters have a point: Industrial home work *is* often the only employment open to rural women. But opening wide the doors to an industry notorious for its low wages and use of child labor is no solution to the tremendous problems facing small-town America. Home work adds no capital, physical plants, roads or community resources. In the long run, such "economic development" only institutionalizes rural poverty.

Unless the Labor Department is prepared to hire perhaps hundreds of new wage-and-hour violation investigators, the broad-based ban on home work should be reimposed. But far more must be done if we are to have a rural America that is free from poverty and underdevelopment. Present farm policies that benefit superfarms while they bankrupt family-sized farms should be rewritten. The government should embark on a program of rural revitalization to upgrade and update the nation's crumbling rural infrastructure.

But these changes will take us only so far. Rural America is not an island apart from the rest of the country—although it is often treated as if it were. The economic and social well-being of rural women ultimately hinges less on the resolution of any narrowly defined "rural" issues and more on our ability as a nation to build a strong labor union movement, provide affordable child care and end sex discrimination at home and at work. Until these larger issues are tackled, home work will continue as a grim but necessary survival strategy for women, both rural and urban. □

China

(*Continued From Front Cover*)

top of the party leadership, as yet not fully played out, even with the appointment of former Shanghai Mayor and Communist Party chief Jiang Zemin as the party's new Secretary. Most prefer to take a guarded position similar to Mayor Zhu's assessment: "History will give a full account of what happened in the end." Some are categorical: "What happened in Beijing could never happen here in Shanghai," they say, implying that the Shanghainese are too pragmatic and rational to resort to that kind of violence.

Such comments reflect an enduring tension between the two centers of power—making Jiang's appointment all the more interesting. Shanghai was the most cosmopolitan and dynamic city in Asia in the 1930s, and as such posed a particular challenge for the Communist government established in Beijing in 1949. In the 1980s, along with coastal cities in southern China, it emerged in the vanguard of the new "open door" modernization program. (As the foremost industrial and commercial city in China, Shanghai contributes 10 percent of the yearly budget of the central government in Beijing.) A saying in Shanghai goes, "Shanghai feeds the cow, Beijing milks it." Moreover, due to its vital importance to the national economy, Shanghai is always under scrutiny by Beijing.

The Shanghainese resent the constant meddling in their affairs by suspicious officials in Beijing. That interference has impeded the city's economic growth, despite a well-orchestrated local effort to stimulate economic dynamism. Now, in addition, Shanghai's officials are forced to deal with the tidal wave aftereffects of the Beijing massacre: weeks of interrupted production, rapidly declining worker morale, frightened foreign investors, absent tourists and empty hotels. Following up on the central government's repeated announcements of an unchanged open door policy, Shanghai has worked hard to project an image of normalcy and stability so as to lure back foreign investors. But city officials understand—and acknowledge privately—that the

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only real reassurance can come from political reform. (While he has experience in conducting business with the West, Jiang is also noted for his firmness against the pro-democracy movement.) Demand for political reform has been festering among Shanghai's intellectuals and economic policy-makers, as reflected in the controversy surrounding the *World Economic Herald.*

In a recent interview, prior to the crackdown on "counter-revolutionary" intellectuals, a former editor of the *Herald* described the publication as "the only magazine in China permitted to publish articles that reflect all points of view, even the antisocialist type, from here and abroad." The topics covered by the *Herald* have ranged from U.S. company mergers and new market economy experiments in Eastern Europe to proposals to expand private ownership in China. In its nine years of existence, with the exception of a period in 1987 when the government forced it to tone down its coverage, the *Herald* was increasingly able to focus on issues born of the day-to-day experiences of China's economic reform. As they took a closer look at those experiences, the editors also came to realize that economic reform must be accompanied by institutional and political change. One of the resident economists summarizes this view: "Politics and economics cannot be separated."

After the death in April of deposed Communist Party Secretary Hu Yaobang, the leading supporter of political reform, the *Herald* intended to publish an article questioning the party procedure by which he had been removed from office. The Shanghai Municipal Assembly censored the issue and fired the magazine's editor in chief. The *World Economic Herald* became the focal point of Shanghai's pro-democracy movement. Up until the appearance of the goon squads on June 9, the front gateway of the Academy of Social Sciences compound that houses the *Herald*'s offices was packed with crowds of students, intellectuals, workers and other citizens listening to pro-democracy speeches, news from Beijing and news from the Voice of America. In both its timing and its motivation, the *Herald*'s action coincided with the Beijing students' demand for democracy and freedom of speech. It was also used to rally support for then-beleaguered Communist Party Secretary Zhao Ziyang, whom the editors saw as the top leader most sympathetic to genuine economic and political reform.

Until last year Zhao was the driving force behind the booming Chinese economy. Initially, the reforms were possible due to the support of China's paramount leader, Deng Xiaoping. Being a strategist rather than a theorist, Deng gave the reformers a free hand as long as they increased China's productivity and improved people's livelihoods without threatening the leadership role of the Communist Party. However, the reformers soon found that economic measures have their own logic once the initial steps are taken, and that their options become narrower. In moving from a planned to a market-oriented economy, governments permit prices of goods to react to forces of supply and demand. The withdrawal of state subsidies and government intervention in the formation of prices opens the door to inflation—which is

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exactly what happened in China. In order to induce higher productivity from a work force increasingly short of ideological motivation, management then had to introduce material incentives and threaten job security. This called for a radical modification of the permanent employment system—the "iron rice bowl"—which the Chinese have taken for granted for forty years. Enterprises are now told to focus on making a profit and that they should no longer expect the state to bail them out. Conversely, the state and the party are no longer to influence managerial decisions. The shifting of accountability to managers has led to alternative forms of public and even private ownership. Eleven companies in Shanghai, for example, are public-stock corporations.

With each new change the power of party officials diminished while their alarm that China was embracing capitalism increased. Unfortunately for the reformers, the inflation that occurred in the process of price reform prevented further measures from being carried out fully. As a result, a dual system of government subsidies and free-market prices for the same goods now exists. This has provided those with political connections with the opportunity to buy a product at government-set prices and resell it, making a large profit, at market value. Those who have benefited most are the sons and daughters of party officials. Of the twenty-eight *qian wan fu weng* ("ten-millionaires") recently reported on in the Chinese press, twenty-six are children of high-ranking government and party officials. Sons of Deng Xiaoping and Zhao Ziyang are known to have engaged in this profiteering.

Corrupt practices have worsened the country's inflation. As it reached 30 percent last year, the bonuses issued by enterprises to stimulate productivity became meaningless. Retirees and intellectuals with fixed incomes were the hardest hit by inflation. Some claim that they spend their entire income on food. As their complaints mounted, the party felt that its reform policies were under attack and decided to slow down the pace of change. The appointment of Li Peng as China's Prime Minister in mid-1988, replacing Zhao Ziyang, was a measure taken to cool down the overheated economy.

Many interpreted that move as the party's betrayal of economic reform. Economists, as well as Zhao, had reasoned that the only effective way to eradicate inflation was to speed up the conversion of all commodities into goods subject to market fluctuations—just as Adam Smith argued two centuries ago. The supporters of this view contend that in the changeover, "a short-lasting acute pain is better than a long-term illness." The ouster of Zhao as Communist Party Secretary seems to indicate that the Chinese economy is being braced for a long illness. Li Peng, remaining in office as Prime Minister with the backing of party elders such as Chen Yun, an orthodox Marxist economist, will most likely adhere to the basic principles of a planned economy, tolerating only a small market sector, mostly in the service industries. One hears Chen Yun's term "bird-cage socialism" whispered in anticipation.

None of the officials interviewed in Shanghai appeared willing to say whether the disputes over economic policy have any bearing on the current struggle within the top party leadership. For now, it seems that the accusing finger is being pointed at Zhao Ziyang. He appears to be the target of a reference made by Deng Xiaoping—in the famous "Chairman Deng's Speech"—to the effect that some people are "trying to overthrow our system for a Western capitalistic one."

All the Shanghai officials, however, agree that economic reform has suffered a major setback. In cooling off inflation, Li Peng has already called for greater government intervention and centralized control of the economy. To one Shanghai economist the tendency is clear: "If you don't move forward, you are moving backward." Yet economists in Shanghai unanimously agree that reform has already gone so far, and gained enough momentum, that nothing will turn it around. Any major reversal would cause chaos in Shanghai and the other cities most affected by the reforms. Perhaps the most optimistic view to be expressed these days is the one that likens reform to eating peanuts: "Once you start, you have to eat your way through."

But even an optimist has to recognize that reformers without political power have to expect tough going: Zhao Ziyang never managed to institutionalize the influence of his advisers, who did not occupy strategic political positions. The only hope is that those who hold political power will recognize the important lessons learned by those who have had hands-on experience with the reforms, and that they will grasp the economic and social reality of the country they lead. After all, it was Deng Xiaoping himself who insisted, "Seek truth from facts." Deng had proposed to lead China on its own road to socialism by feeling for the rocks—as he put it—as he made his way across the river. Some economists in Shanghai are pointing out, though, that there is no need to feel for the rocks, for there is already a bridge built a little way up the stream. □

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BOOKS & THE ARTS.

The Bard of Deprivation

MATTHEW FLAMM

PHILIP LARKIN: COLLECTED POEMS. *Edited and with an introduction by Anthony Thwaite. Farrar, Straus & Giroux and The Marvell Press. 330 pp. $22.50.*

Philip Larkin, it would no doubt have troubled him to hear, was a saint, the Mother Theresa of postwar British letters. Granted, there have been few poets more grudging of experience, prone to disappointment or bluntly pessimistic than the man who was England's so-called unofficial laureate until his death four years ago at the age of 63. But there have also been few poets more innocent. For all his tough-guy mannerisms, his air of having two feet on firm ground, Larkin was a romantic who worshiped purity. The graceful but forgettable early work that has been tucked in at the back of the *Collected Poems* reveals an unearthly soul prematurely despairing of love and life. The fey lyricism can be blamed on Larkin's oft-mentioned youthful infatuation with Yeats. But the later Larkin isn't all that different; he just learned to talk about his doomed yearnings for bliss with the full force of his own experience, in his own flat urban voice.

This is not to denigrate Larkin's accomplishment or this scrupulously prepared if somewhat unsatisfying book. During his lifetime, Larkin published sparingly—the Yeats- and Auden-influenced *The North Ship* (1945); followed by *The Less Deceived* (1955), which established his voice; *The Whitsun Weddings* (1964), which made his reputation; and the supremely lucid *High Windows* (1974), which confirmed it. There were also poems published in journals but never collected, and dozens of others—unfinished, too personal or too slight—that, we now learn, he kept to himself.

The inclusion in this volume of what Larkin had kept unpublished made publication of the *Collected Poems* a controversial event in Britain. (While instructing that his diaries be destroyed, he had allowed his literary executors "discretion over . . . his unpublished manuscripts," according to the introduction.)

Matthew Flamm is a reporter for the New York Post.

But the edition, adding eighty-odd poems to the eighty or so that he was known for, couldn't possibly have hurt his reputation. A notoriously narrow poet, his limitations were always self-evident.

The *Collected Poems*, with the works dated on the bottom and arranged chronologically, has none of the dramatic tension or thematic arguments Larkin's own arrangements convey, making it useful mainly for those readers already familiar with him. It does, however, offer roughly ten good poems never printed before (plus the remarkable "Aubade," published in the *Times Literary Supplement* in 1977) and provide a view of the poet working the same territory for years. Narrowness, Larkin shows, can also be a virtue. His first-rate work continues to shine, drawing its singularly pure emotional power from that all-solving bliss that hovers rainbowlike overhead.

Indeed, Larkin, a lifelong bachelor who lived in far-off Hull, cultivated narrowness. A near-parody of the insular Brit, he claimed to read no foreign authors or anything "difficult," avoided the literary life, earned his living as the University librarian and rarely traveled. Reading the few interviews he gave, one is struck by the same clarity of mind found in the poems, the same sharp humor and touching directness—and the same passivity. It may be that the brilliant simplicity of lines like "The trees are coming into leaf/Like something almost being said;/The recent buds relax and spread,/Their greenness is a kind of grief," required a certain pure, distant way of life. The drawback is that Larkin, who grew up with a stammer, apparently left its psychological legacy unchallenged—which he described as "you never take the lead in anything or do anything but try to efface yourself." Conditioned further by a shrinking postwar Britain, he became a connoisseur of limits, his every wish breaking on the wall of bracing truth. The main weakness of the poems is that his wishes too often met with failure and remorse and, loading the deck even more, he kept to subjects that aroused those feelings.

And yet it was Larkin's greatest strength to want so much that which he couldn't have. In this he resembled his favorite poet, Thomas Hardy, whose first, unhappy marriage inspired poem after poem of regret once his wife died. Larkin longed for youth when middle-aged (that is, from his mid-twenties on); for untroubled solitude in a world he recognized as social; for perfectly blissful love, which he knew was a myth. He once said, "Deprivation is for me what daffodils were for Wordsworth," but he would have been more accurate crediting the unattainable. He could describe with heart-rending precision the lure of impossible promises because he hadn't stopped believing them. Happiness, he also said, was "much easier to imagine . . . than to experience"—a characteristically self-deflating remark, until one realizes what Larkin imagined happiness to be. An innocent, he saw things in the purest terms. His was a vision of happiness—like the young wife's in "Wedding Wind"—that nobody could live with for long:

> Can it be borne, this bodying-forth by wind
> Of joy my actions turn on, like a thread
> Carrying beads? Shall I be let to sleep
> Now this perpetual morning shares my bed?
> Can even death dry up
> These new-delighted lakes . . . ?

It's an irony typical of Larkin's poetry that a grumpy, boozing nonbeliever should have been martyred to the ideal life. Like the Japanese poets who could better describe a beautiful day if they stayed indoors, he sacrificed finite pleasures for the freedom to imagine infinite ones ("Choice of you shuts up that peacock-fan/The future was," begins the previously unpublished "To My Wife").

That sacrifice is worth noting; Larkin required—and went to great lengths to justify—his isolation, but he didn't exult in it. "He devoted his life to others" is his self-mocking summary in a late poem "Sympathy in White Major," and there's more truth to the line than he could ever let on. Narrow as he was, he managed to work into poetry parts of the ordinary world—hospital corridors, urban playgrounds, deserted hotel lobbies—that had seldom been there before. And he did so in highly lyrical, flawlessly rhymed poems, without making these things "poetic" and therefore foreign to the ordinary person. (Not so coincidentally, the *Collected Poems* was a best-seller in England.) Even the moon, at the poet's discreetly virtuoso touch, is given a human dimension:

> One shivers slightly, looking up there.

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The hardness and the brightness and the plain
Far-reaching singleness of that wide stare

Is a reminder of the strength and pain
Of being young; that it can't come again,
But is for others undiminished somewhere.

"Sad Steps"

In addition to his powers of identification, envy and longing combined to make Larkin the most sympathetic of outsiders; he was at his best comforting fellow dreamers. (And he was also capable, observing the newlywed couples in "The Whitsun Weddings," of taking the visionary leap that shows their dream coming true.) If he sounds bitter, harping on aging, death and loneliness, it's partly to break self-deception's spell. "Faith Healing" begins with a scene like something out of *The PTL Club* ("*Now, dear child,/What's wrong*, the deep American voice demands") and builds to this bald diagnosis:

By now, all's wrong. In everyone there sleeps
A sense of life lived according to love.
To some it means the difference they could make
By loving others, but across most it sweeps
As all they might have done had they been loved.

That nothing cures.

The poet, too, cures nothing, but he can at least redeem suffering through art:

An immense slackening ache,
As when, thawing, the rigid landscape weeps,
Spreads slowly through them—that, and the voice above
Saying *Dear child*, and all time has disproved. □

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A New New Deal

SUSAN WARE

THE RISE AND FALL OF THE NEW DEAL ORDER, 1930–1980. *Edited by Steve Fraser and Gary Gerstle. Princeton University Press. 311 pp. $25.*

As the twenty-first century approaches, a new generation of scholars is providing fresh historical perspectives on the twentieth. The contributors to *The Rise and Fall of the New Deal Order, 1930–1980* move beyond both the self-congratulation of traditional liberals and the hostility of New Left radicals. This collection of ten essays, written mainly by scholars who came of age after the New Deal legacy had been tarnished, represents the cutting edge of historical scholarship on twentieth-century American political life.

Editors Steve Fraser and Gary Gerstle offer readers a "historical autopsy" of the emergence, crystallization and decomposition of the New Deal order between 1930 and 1980. Drawing on the insights of the new political history, the authors examine underlying economic developments and social trends, not merely electoral results or particular presidential administrations, to explain the politics of the past half-century. For example, Thomas Ferguson and Michael Bernstein resist the temptation to focus on Franklin Delano Roosevelt as the master architect of the 1930s. Instead, they explain the course of the Depression and the formation of the New Deal as the outgrowth of economic developments and shifts in the business community, especially its realignment toward a consumer-based economy. Similarly, the decline of the New Deal order, which the authors collectively date as far back as 1960, is attributed to the interplay of economics, morality and race, not to the consequences of presidential decision-making.

Susan Ware teaches history at New York University. She is at work on a book about popular heroines of the 1930s that focuses on Amelia Earhart.

Perhaps the greatest surprise in the collection is the emphasis on the 1940s rather than the 1930s as the formative years of modern political life. Alan Brinkley's essay on the reorientation between 1937 and 1945 of liberal ideas about the state serves as the cornerstone of the volume. In the late 1930s the New Deal floundered in ideological disorder, but by 1945 a new Keynesian consensus on the role of the state had emerged, one that continues to shape the liberal agenda. The decision to use fiscal policies to stimulate economic growth and redress social and economic imbalances allowed the state to intervene in the economy without directly confronting the power of capitalists. The expansion of economic well-being became the overarching goal for both the public and private sectors in the postwar period. Thus, the true legacy of the New Deal does not lie in the limited social welfare initiatives of the 1930s, when government spending was seen as a necessary evil in the fight against the Great Depression. It lies instead in liberalism's acceptance by the 1940s of government spending as a positive good, an ideological transformation hastened by World War II and the return of prosperity.

Contributors Nelson Lichtenstein and Ira Katznelson similarly emphasize the 1940s as the watershed decade for recent politics. Lichtenstein identifies the period between 1946 and 1948 as a major turning point, when labor's broad vision of economic planning and redistribution ran up against (and was quashed by) the remobilization of conservative business and political forces that produced such measures as the Taft-Hartley Act of 1947. Labor leaders thereafter shifted their energies toward more privatized welfare programs. And Ira Katznelson provocatively traces the failures of President Lyndon Johnson's Great Society back to the 1940s, arguing that immediate postwar political developments—including the derogation of labor to just another interest group and the substitution of mass consumption for the politics of class—sharply reduced the potential for achieving social democracy through the political process. The Great Society,

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therefore, self-destructed not only because of the Vietnam War but because of choices made twenty years earlier.

The other recurring theme in the collection is the centrality of race. The lurking contradiction between the welfare state's rhetorical commitment to mass consumption and to economic abundance for all, and the continuing marginalization of blacks, both economically and politically, guaranteed that the issue of race would eventually reach the center stage of national political consciousness. The strategic role played by the conservative, white-controlled Southern Democratic Party in the New Deal political coalition and the failure of the labor movement to crack open the South meant that only in response to the extraordinary political mobilization of the civil rights movement in the 1960s would the Federal government challenge the status quo. As contributors Jonathan Rieder and Thomas Byrne Edsall demonstrate in their chronicle of the consequences of the expanding Federal commitment to civil rights, few issues have been so salient in recent politics as race.

Any good collection of essays (and this is a very good one indeed) adds up to a sum greater than its parts. Still, there are lapses and omissions in this volume. Several authors overestimate the democratic possibilities of the labor movement in its heyday; black workers, for example, would scarcely have uniformly viewed unions as bastions of social democracy in the 1930s and 1940s. There is little attention paid to issues of gender and politics in this otherwise comprehensive volume. Where are such topics as the relation of feminism to liberalism, the conception of gender embedded in the welfare state and the history of the gender gap in voting? The women's movement is only briefly addressed in Maurice Isserman and Michael Kazin's essay on the new radicalism of the 1960s. And Elaine Tyler May's otherwise interesting discussion of the interconnections between cold war politics and postwar domesticity fails to connect with the themes played out in the rest of the book.

The New Deal order is dead, the victim of its own internal contradictions as well as of the changing economic and social conditions of modern American life. This volume is hardly the first to announce its demise. But by offering a new generation of scholars the chance to look beyond personalities and current events in order to explore underlying social and economic themes, a richer,

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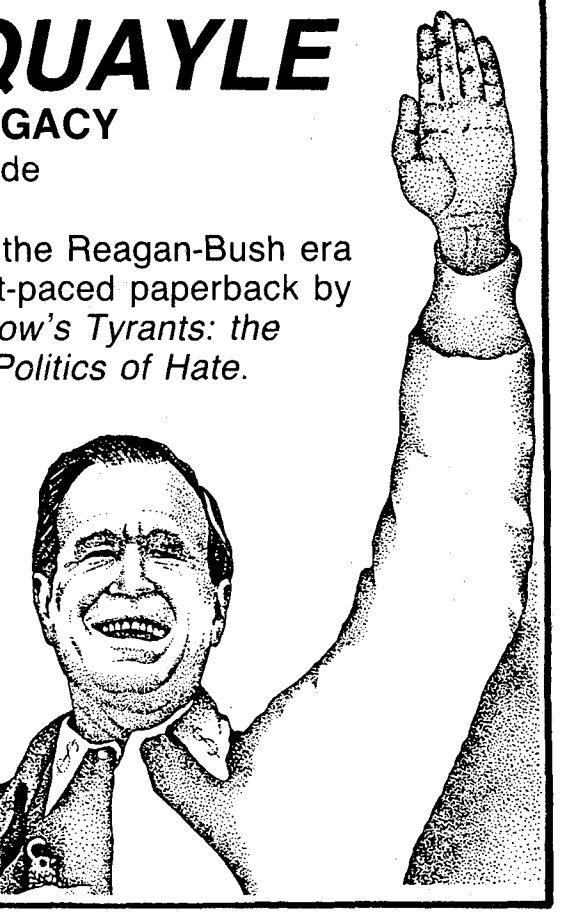

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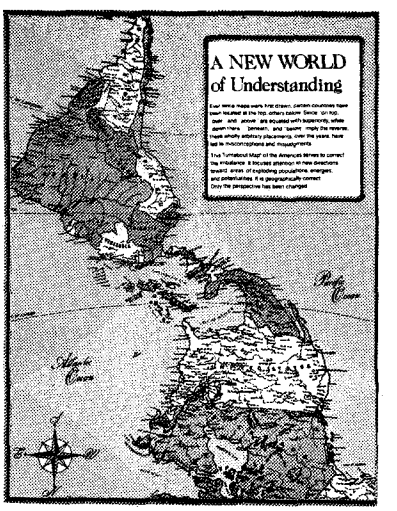

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more thoughtful portrayal of the New Deal legacy emerges. This collection may not deliver the "startlingly new interpretations" promised by the editors, but it does raise the level of discourse in a helpful and stimulating manner. □

Seeing Black

PAUL MATTICK JR.

THE IMAGE OF THE BLACK IN WESTERN ART, Vol. IV: From the American Revolution to World War I. *By Hugh Honour. Menil Foundation. Harvard University Press.* Part 1: Slaves and Liberators. *379 pp. $50.* Part 2: Black Models and White Myths. *306 pp. $50.*

Just as "image" can be used to speak both of pictures and of mental constructs, "black" is at once a visual category and a social classification. The interest, from the viewpoints of art history and the history of modern society generally, of the topic of Hugh Honour's new book is therefore obvious. In addition, the images illustrated and discussed in *The Image of the Black in Western Art* are "no mere historical documents. They have a continuing relevance as the products of a white society whose opinions and acts have blighted and continue to blight the lives of millions of human beings." However, hardly any large-scale studies have been devoted to this topic. For this reason we can only be grateful to Honour for his work. (It follows by six years two volumes devoted to classical and medieval art; one still to be published will deal with the Renaissance.) His thoughtful text reflects an enormous labor of investigation into the history of race relations as well as into representations of that history, and it is well and generously illustrated, in good color as well as black-and-white. These illustrations make it clear just how present blacks have been in the art of the West since 1700. Though commonly marginalized pictorially, as servants or "local color," in images not dedicated to the institution of slavery or black genre scenes, this presence is a visual demonstration of the important roles played by blacks in the history of so-called white society.

Volume IV, the last of the set, covers the period from the late eighteenth to the early twentieth centuries. Part 1 quite properly focuses on representations of slavery, the central fact of the appearance of the black in the West. Indeed, as Honour points out, "black" and "slave" are practically synonyms until the later nineteenth century. He distinguishes between European and American uses of this image, the first tending to see in blacks embodiments of slavery, which could symbolize other forms of oppression as well; the latter more often portraying blacks as individuals, often without explicit reference to their status. This judgment is not, to my eyes, borne out by the illustrations in Honour's book—which in any case reserves its highest praise for Girodet's magnificent portrait of Jean-Baptiste Belley, delegate to the Convention in Paris from Saint-Dominigue after the abolition of slavery in 1793, and for the flag-waver at the pictorial summit of Gericault's *The Raft of the Medusa.*

Following American emancipation, "images of Afro-Americans became increasingly rare in European art while they were ever more frequently depicted in the United States," after having been strikingly absent from American "fine" art—though not from prints and other "popular" arts—before the 1830s. Their place was taken in European imagery by the inhabitants of an Africa increasingly coming under colonization. The image of the kneeling slave appealing for freedom or of the ex-slave grateful to the emancipating white was transformed into that of the native being raised from savagery (however noble) by Western civilizers.

Part 2 presents a gallery of European and American pictures of blacks largely falling outside the category of representations of slavery. It includes formal portraits and studies, ethnographic images of African populations, American "Negro Subjects," Orientalist extravaganzas and aspects of modernist primitivism. A fascinating section deals with harem fantasies, with blacks featured both as sex slaves and as masters bending white women to their will.

Throughout, in his choice and discussion of pictures, Honour is clearly a man of more than good political will as well as of great erudition. It must nevertheless be said that a number of important issues, some of which he himself raises in passing, have not been engaged. First of all is that of the nature of the images collected, and so of those largely excluded from consideration. Honour points out that *art* "is a socially constructed category," during the centuries of his study embracing only sculpture, painting and prints derived from them. It obviously makes sense to study the racial imagery produced within this category of social representation, which indeed demonstrates "the role of the arts in maintaining an established order with its ranks, marginalizations, and exclusions." On the other hand, placing such imagery alongside that of the popular press, whether reportorial or caricatural in intent, and that which presented itself as scientific information, such as ethnographic or medical illustration, can illuminate both the pervasiveness of stereotypes and, occasionally, resistance to them. By bringing art into comparison with medical illustration, for example, Sander Gilman has demonstrated a linkage between two apparently unrelated images, that of the black woman and that of the prostitute. Honour's resistance to such procedures seems to be due to a view of illustration as essentially "photographic," and as such as different from artworks, which he understands as expressions of the creative spirit of the artist. His standpoint, that is, remains that of the socially constructed institution of art that he is investigating.

This standpoint is visible also in Honour's choice of works for discussion and in his evaluations of them. There is almost no work by black artists; we have Thomas Eakins's portrait of H.O. Tanner, but nothing by Tanner himself (although, for example, his *Banjo Lesson*, with its quiet domestic feeling and theme of black tradition, would have been an interesting complement to the examples of the music theme Honour includes). Perhaps this is due to Honour's practical identification, against the evidence of the social history he presents, of "Western" with "white" society and art. Honour's commentary tends to dwell on the works of artists acknowledged as great—Gericault, Turner, Manet, Homer—generally seen both as rising above the prejudices of their times and as transcending their subject matter to offer images of "the human condition."

This easily comprehensible urge to celebrate great paintings on occasion leads Honour to overlook important features of the works. For example, he praises Marie-Guilhelmine Benoist's *Portrait d'une négresse* for its portrayal of its

Paul Mattick Jr. teaches philosophy at Adelphi University.

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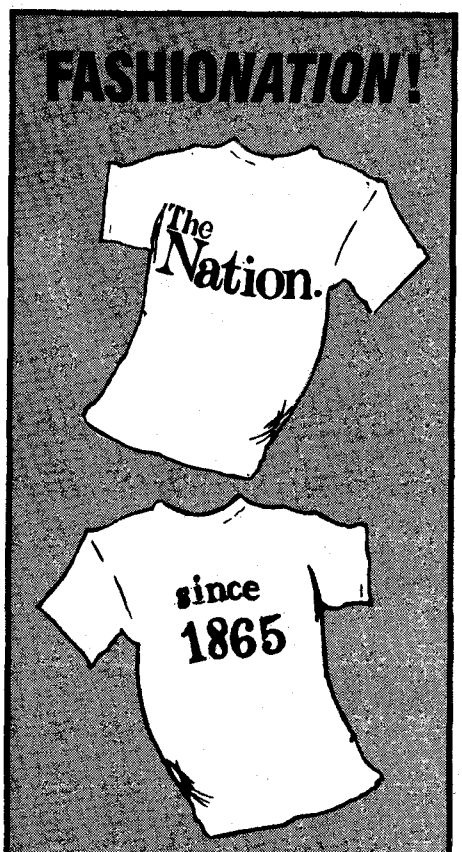

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subject "as an individual, living, feeling, fellow human being," differing from portraits by her teacher David "only in so far as it represents an anonymous sitter." But it is unlike any female portrait by David or, to my knowledge, any other artist around 1800, in showing the sitter with one breast fully exposed. It's hard not to suspect that this has to do with the blackness as well as the anonymity of the subject. In general, the role of gender, and its relation to race, is undertreated in this book. The presence of the black servant in Manet's *Olympia* is not related to that picture's theme of prostitution, just as an earlier black in Delacroix's *Women of Algiers* is seen as carrying "no burden of symbolism." In fact these figures belong to a tradition of black servants of courtesans, harlots and rakes, who play a role, well established by the end of the eighteenth century, as signifiers of illicit sexuality. To take another social category, while Honour compares the Marquesans in a Gauguin drawing to Millet's peasants, he doesn't make the stronger case for such a comparison with respect to Winslow Homer's *The Cotton Pickers*; its two meditative working women monumentalized against cotton fields and the sky. Honour seems, that is, to be uninterested in the extent to which peasants and blacks (and other "primitives") could play similar ideological roles in the later nineteenth century.

This is to say, finally, that the central topic of race itself is insufficiently thought through in this book. An understanding of what it has meant and means would require tracing the complex linkages between this category and such other central categories of modern social experience as class, gender and nationality, and working out the ways in which these articulations of social power provided forms for the development of capitalism. Honour provides a useful summary of the evolution of racial concepts from the Enlightenment on, and he makes clear his rejection not just of the racist aesthetics that equated blackness with ugliness (if also with sublimity) but of the scientific status of the concept of race itself. Thus he ends his book happy that in the period since World War II "the image of the black as the antithesis of a white was beginning to lose its meaning." It is far from clear that racial classification has in fact become less central in recent decades. And Honour himself also describes this period as one in which Western culture has become "more willing to respect ethnic identity as the natural right of every human being." To whatever extent this is true—and it might be far from obvious to the various official minorities inhabiting Europe and North America, not to mention the Indians facing extermination in Central and South America—this "respect" at this point is only the other side of our failure to eliminate the structures of exploitation and privilege both legitimated and resisted in the name of color. Whatever its shortcomings, Honour's book demonstrates that this "natural right" is in actuality as socially constructed as the arts whose role in this construction he illuminates. □

FILMS.

STUART KLAWANS

Do the Right Thing
Batman

In the days of the Harlem Renaissance, when Langston Hughes was being attacked in some quarters for writing about black America's lower classes, Carl Van Vechten remarked jestingly to the poet, "You and I are the only colored people who really love *niggers*."

As it was with Hughes, so it has been with Spike Lee. He began his career only half a dozen years ago with the remarkably accomplished student film *Joe's Bed-Stuy Barbershop: We Cut Heads*. No one who saw it could ignore either Lee's talent or his love for the common citizens of the Brooklyn ghetto—not just the upward-striving, the politically involved, the gifted, but the whole range of street-corner society. In *She's Gotta Have It*, Lee himself portrays the fast-talking Mars Blackmon, who won't let anything so small as sexual jealousy come between him and a fellow African-American. In *School Daze*, the entire film depends on the conflict between black people who are plainly, emphatically black and those who are wannabees—that is, who want to be white. Now, in *Do the Right Thing*, you can still hear the echoes of Mars Blackmon's sentiment in the catch-phrase of Buggin Out (Giancarlo Esposito), whose standard parting line is, "Stay black."

A love like that separates loyalists from sellouts. It also animates certain troubled characters with a talent for making themselves unpopular. Jesters mock

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and receive favors in return; satirists love, and that seems to be Spike Lee's hard fate.

Do the Right Thing is Lee's most complex, heartfelt and disturbing film to date, a drama about racism that is more shockingly outspoken than any I've seen since David Mamet's great, and neglected, *Edmond*. Needless to say, the film depicts white bigotry with all due contempt. The best of the white characters—who seems a very good man indeed—is still ready to scream "nigger" when all else fails; the worst are willing to kill. The melanin-impaired will therefore feel uncomfortable with this film, and with good reason. But so, too, might the black community. Lee loves his fellow African-Americans, but he also portrays them as political good-for-nothings, long on talk and short on action, except when their actions are misguided. In *Do the Right Thing*, nobody does.

Set on a single block in Bedford-Stuyvesant, *Do the Right Thing* follows about two dozen characters through a very hot summer's day, from a morning when interracial civility is already strained to a night when all hell breaks loose. The structure is episodic; brief, seemingly self-enclosed dramas follow one another rapidly, with two characters helping to frame and judge the action. The first of these is Mister Señor Love Daddy (Sam Jackson), disc jockey of an extremely local radio station, who observes the neighborhood through his living-room window and broadcasts what he sees, along with the finest in black music. The second framing character is Da Mayor (Ossie Davis), an old gentleman who rambles up and down the block all day. Da Mayor is courtly and kindhearted; he's also a drunk. To some of the younger people, he is a figure of fun. To Mother Sister (Ruby Dee), the block's reigning older woman, he is a contemptible bum. It is Da Mayor who enunciates the sentiment of the title, "Always do the right thing," in addressing his neighbor Mookie (Spike Lee). And in fact, Mookie tries hard to follow that advice. The effort he makes, and the degree to which he fails, will be the subject of debate for everyone who sees the film.

When we first see him, Mookie is at home with his sister Jade (Joie Lee), who is running out of patience with him as an unpaying roommate. As far as she is concerned, Mookie should get an apartment of his own, preferably with his girlfriend, Tina (Rosie Perez), and his infant son. Apparently, Mookie lays eyes on Tina only when he wants to do the nasty. Then, pleading the need to work, he disappears again from her life, proceeding in the general direction of his place of employment, Sal's Famous Pizzeria.

The whole neighborhood seems to meet at Sal's, and has done so for twenty-five years. In the words of Sal himself (Danny Aiello), "These people grew up on my food. And I'm very proud of that." Bearlike and bluff, Sal enjoys his business, enjoys his customers (most of them) and treats Mookie with the same combination of amused tolerance and restrained sarcasm that Mookie uses with him. There's even a grudging respect between Sal and his deliveryman—and that is a problem for Mookie. He can deal with Sal's son Pino (John Turturro), an outspoken bigot who spends the day urging honest labor on Mookie while avoiding his own work. Since Pino has declared himself an enemy of all black people, Mookie can respond in kind, with a clear conscience. But Sal is not simply the enemy. He's humane enough to command some loyalty from Mookie, who then is caught between his white boss and his black friends and neighbors.

Mookie's conflict begins with a visit from Buggin Out, owner of the fastest mouth and strangest hairstyle on the block. In search of a fresh shot of adrenaline, Buggin Out picks a fight with Sal over the pizzeria's Wall of Fame: a display of photographs of celebrated Italian-Americans. Where are the photos of black people? Has Sal never heard of Malcolm X and Michael Jordan? Buggin Out blusters; Sal boils over; Mookie gets the unhappy task of escorting his friend outside. Mookie tries to keep the incident on a personal level, complaining that Buggin Out is giving him trouble at his job. Buggin Out absolves Mookie but says goodbye with a meaningful "Stay black."

The conflict worsens with the appearance in the pizzeria of Radio Raheem (Bill Nunn). Powerfully built, inarticulate, able to peel the paint off walls with a single glare, Raheem takes his nickname from his constant companion, the biggest boom-box in Brooklyn. He stalks the neighborhood on a single-minded mission: making sure that every resident of Bed-Stuy hears the soothing tones of "Fight the Power" by Public Enemy. This is the only song he will play—in fact, the only one he will allow anyone to hear. With a heart-stopping glower and the push of a lever on his mighty box, Raheem drowns out all other music in the neighborhood. Sal threatens to throw him out of the pizzeria.

Now there are two people on the block with a grudge against Sal. A third joins their ranks when Pino gratuitously insults Smiley, the neighborhood idiot (Rog-

MILK THE MOUSE

He'll pinch my pinky until the mouse starts squeaking.
The floorlamp casts a halo around his big, stuffed chair.
Be strong Be tough! It is my father speaking.

I'm four or five. Was he already drinking?
With its tip and knuckle between his thumb and finger,
he'll pinch my pinky until the mouse starts squeaking

Stop, Daddy, stop (it was more like screeching)
and kneels down before him on the hardwood floor.
Be strong Be tough! It is my father speaking.

What happened to him that he'd do such a thing?
It's only a game, he's doing me a favor
to pinch my pinky until the mouse starts squeaking

because the world will run over a weakling
and we must crush the mouse or be crushed later.
Be strong Be tough! It was my father speaking

to himself, of course, to the child inside him aching,
not to me. But how can I not go when he calls me over
to pinch my pinky until the mouse starts squeaking
Be strong Be tough? It is my father speaking.

Michael Ryan

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er Guenveur Smith). Ordinarily, Smiley goes about preaching love and selling hand-decorated photographs of Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X. Once he's been chased down the block, though, Smiley, too, is ready to take action against Sal's Famous.

Consider Mookie's dilemma. On one side, there are the protesters—his own people, even though they can't agree on what they're protesting, even though Mookie actually likes only one of the three. On the other side, there is Sal. Though Mookie *almost* likes him, he is white, he's the boss, and he is backed by a police force that's willing to kill black people. As the long, hot day comes to a boil, Mookie is given one moment to decide how to do the right thing. And that's the moment when Sal announces his own, antithetical philosophy: "You do what you gotta."

So *Do the Right Thing* comes down to an argument between morality and necessity—or rather, alleged necessity. It is a film about conflicting loyalties and evaded responsibilities; about the way our society values a white man's property over a black man's life; about the terrible gap between a community's need to mobilize itself and an individual's political acumen. To call these themes and their treatment inflammatory would be no more than the literal truth. More to the point, Spike Lee makes them lively and vivid, funny and exasperating as well.

His style is deliberately juiced-up. The editing is fast, with dialogue sometimes crosscut on each line; the acting is often more stylized than natural. When Sal and his family first appear, for example, they seem to use three hand gestures for each spoken word. As in the past, Lee often points his camera head-on to the actors and has them talk straight into the lens. When even that method seems too oblique, he begins the shot with a fast dolly, as if the camera were a speeding Pontiac, jolting to a stop before somebody who refuses to get out of the way. Add to all this the episodic structure and the tendency of some of the characters to act out, and the film at times takes on an almost cartoonlike quality.

In other words, the style closely matches the characters' thoughts, which tend toward big, simplified outlines—the contours of a Hanna-Barbera cartoon, rather than a Disney animation. *Do the Right Thing* is very smart about portraying politics at this very dumb level. On the street, as Lee knows, there is little reasoned argument but a lot of totemism. Everything depends on which song is coming out of your radio, which photo is on the wall of your shop, which brand of sneaker you're wearing. The mere presence of a Boston Celtics jersey on a Bed-Stuy street is an insult to the residents—and if you don't know that, you obviously don't belong on the street in the first place. This, may heaven help us, is real American politics—which explains the inclusion of simple-minded Smiley in the plot and his ghastly moment of triumph at the climax.

Many of the reactions to the film, I imagine, will be on Smiley's level. Already Lee has had to explain that *Do the Right Thing* is not based on the Howard Beach case—that is, on white vigilantism—but is instead about the background to police violence. In some quarters, official murder is always alleged, never real. In those same quarters editorialists will probably call Lee's film an incitement to riot. (Sure—and racism, as Reagan informed us, is caused by civil rights leaders.) Among more open-minded viewers, though, *Do the Right Thing* will be seen as an incitement to thought. I hope the sidewalks outside the movie theaters this summer will be filled with people arguing over the rights and wrongs of Mookie's actions and the meanings of the two texts—one by Dr. King, the other by Malcolm X—that close the film.

N.B.: The opening credits feature a couple of women doing the bump-and-grind, which is hardly a tribute to Lee's taste or to the sophistication of his audience. I beg your patience with that sequence and with a later interlude of tits and ass. Maybe the heat got to Spike.

This is like reviewing the Dow-Jones average, but here goes.

Batman has been written by Sam Hamm and Warren Skaaren, directed by Tim Burton, and promoted by Warner Bros. in the merchandiser's equivalent of carpet-bombing. By now, nobody except a resident of Tirana, Albania, can be unaware that Michael Keaton plays the caped crusader of comic-book fame,

AFTER THE REUNION

To finish by picking up pieces of cake and small clutter
from the sunporch floor, to finish by cleaning up.

We couldn't tell them—not the host of relatives
happy to be on each other's hands again,

each other's nerves.
The lilac hedge let go all its bushel of odors

and our acre's birds kept the trees stitched
with their art. Everybody said so.

Someone's boss is somebody's neighbor.
Who looks like who in the crisp old albums?

—What kind of linen, what brand of seed, what
do you do when things get bad?

There is nothing
that does not connect and so sustain.

And now I want us to keep trying to love each other, too.
The courage it takes is their patience—gentle,

stretching its legs, waiting long.
Who knows what sadnesses each of them has lived?

Who knows which ones we have caused?
Let's open the door and let the bluejays and sparrows

weep while we clean. Let's take all day. Let's keep
the napkin our last waving aunt pressed

a kiss into—red, already powdered, doomed as a rose . . .

David Baker

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that Jack Nicholson plays his nemesis, the Joker, and that only the licensed T-shirt (accept no substitute) has the trademarked bat-emblem. Is there anything more to be said?

The report: Production values are up sharply. The film looks great, thanks to the designs of Anton Furst and the cinematography of Roger Pratt. Gotham City seems both cartoonish and utterly convincing, like a Manhattan built in collaboration by Raymond Hood and Piranesi. It's both futuristic and rundown, and far dirtier than the usual setting for even a dystopian fantasy.

Pacing and editing are slightly off. One moment, the film literally races off, as the Batmobile hurtles toward the Joker's lair. The next moment, Tim Burton stops the picture dead, just for the sake of outlining the bat symbol against a full moon. Violence is plentiful, but suspense is in short supply. Sometimes, even in the midst of a fight scene, I found myself wondering when something would finally happen in this movie.

Acting is mixed. Keaton, to his credit, seems to think he's portraying a human being as Batman/Bruce Wayne. Though the script offers scant support for this conviction, he nevertheless gives an unexpectedly nuanced, controlled performance. Perhaps his Satanic eyebrows help; even at his most genial, Keaton suggests dark obsessions. Nicholson, though, seems intent on finally matching Marlon Brando's shenanigans in *The Missouri Breaks*. Maybe some viewers will think his Joker is the very spirit of unreason loosed on the world. I say he's done everything short of announcing, "Here's Johnny."

Coherence is down in heavy trading. Although the visual style and the music by Danny Elfman help to sustain a mood of nocturnal danger, Burton and his writers don't seem fully committed to the dark side of the film. Just as Nicholson's performance is at cross-purposes with Keaton's, so is the film as a whole at odds with itself, building up moments of real intensity only to dissipate them in splashy but unaffecting scenes of mayhem, or in slapstick that's cartoonish in the lowest sense of the term. The reason, I suppose, is that you can't sell T-shirts with a nightmare; and so, though *Batman* is explicitly, inescapably an urban vigilante fantasy, it is also a rather thin comedy. Its greatest virtue is that it looks good; its one consistent theme is the importance of appearances. *Batman* is literally about cosmetics. □

MUSIC.

GENE SANTORO

International Music on Videotape

The varieties of rock and roll and pop that you can't see on MTV are finding their way onto videotape. Here are some of the most interesting selections.

Roots, Rock, Reggae is one of four films on tape by British producer and director Jeremy Marre to be released by the indie Shanachie record label. (The series *Beats of the Heart* will eventually include all fourteen of Marre's documentaries.) Marre has a journalist's eye for the telling detail, an individual way of talking and thinking, the particular shape of a culture in an increasingly homogeneous world. He, and the narrators he selects, always locate the artifacts of a culture within its political and economic frame. Still, he lets the sheer, seductive pleasure of the music unfold before you.

Roots, Rock, Reggae was shot in 1977, when reggae's popularity in its Jamaican birthplace was at its height. Old footage of breakthrough artists like Toots and the Maytals and Jimmy Cliff traces the music's history, buttressed by extensive forays through the Trenchtown ghetto and the outlying hills where the Rastafarians who invented reggae settled. Stops at the Trenchtown home of Bob Marley's mentor, Joe Higgs; at the studio of legendary producer Lee "Scratch" Perry; at rehearsals and sessions with several bands; at radio stations and mobile D.J. setups; and at top shop and hangout Randy's Records provide one kind of background. Narration about the ghetto, political gang wars, Marcus Garvey, the revolutionary sound mixes wrought by reggae producers, the problem of local music forms being swallowed by the international market and so on provide another. In fifty-three minutes this offers an excellent, if somewhat dated, overview.

Two of the most luminous Rastamen who made early reggae were Bob Marley and Peter Tosh, who with Bunny Wailer formed the original Wailers in the early 1960s. (They split up in 1974.) Marley, with his by turns pointed and tender lyrics, the gritty ache of a voice punctuated by a whooping yodel, and propulsively lean arrangements, became the international messenger for both the music and its ideologies, political and religious. Through his appeal to the increasingly repressed ex-colonials in England, reggae penetrated to long-established British popsters like Eric Clapton (who covered "I Shot the Sheriff" in 1974) and inspired white and mixed British reggae groups like The Police and UB40. Thanks in part to the pan-Africanism Marley espoused on his tours and recordings, reggae won the hearts of many African listeners, resulting in African reggae performers like Alpha Blondy, Lucky Dube and countless others.

Bob Marley and the Wailers: Live at the Rainbow (RCA/Columbia) captures Marley in 1977, at the moment of his international breakthrough. Well shot, with excellent sound, the forty-minute concert footage boasts the muscular Wailers band and its backup vocalists, the I-Threes—Rita Marley, Judy Mowatt and Marcia Griffiths. (All of them have since become reggae stars in their own well-deserved rights.) But it is the charismatic Marley, with his torn vocals, his slow-motion dance, his in-place jogging, who seizes and holds the stage, a shaman for the late twentieth century.

Early co-conspirator Peter Tosh outlived Marley only to die in a gunfight in 1987. He was captured on video in 1973 in *Peter Tosh Live* (Sony). Tosh's influence worldwide has been second only to Marley's—South Africa's Lucky Dube, for instance, is immensely indebted to his gruff, raggedy vocals and slightly slurred and dragged-out phrasing. And his commitment to Rastafaria's idealistic goals and realistic analyses was fervent, as is made clear by tunes like "African," which stresses the universal nature of the struggle against European neocolonialism.

This sixty-minute tape also contains Tosh's stunning reworking—a classic itself—of Chuck Berry's classic rock anthem "Johnny B. Goode." Tosh transforms the tune into a brooding minor-key meditation in reggae time. His *au courant* use of dub techniques and his enlistment of American blues guitarist Donald Kinsey in his band testify to his ceaseless attempts to meet people on their own terms without diluting his.

That's one of the challenges facing international pop musicians trying to break out of their home countries and into the worldwide marketplace. The pipelines feeding that market are owned and operated by a handful of European-American-Japanese conglomerates—the world of cyberpunk novelist William Gibson in all-too-real life. Questions ga-

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lore arise from the confrontation: How much adaptation results from access to better technology, new sounds, different ideas? How much is co-optation by marketers whose ever-pressing desire is to homogenize the music, to bland it out? Will all people, all cultures, all ideas become one soggy, formless mess, without the meaningful differences that power human endeavor? Will the world's music be absorbed into the Hollywood-designed star system that substitutes entertainment, a one-sided relationship, for culture, which is what people create?

Some of those concerns are addressed by one of Marre's most powerful films, *Salsa* (Shanachie). It dives unabashedly into the contradictions underlying the music: middle-class Latinos versus ghetto Puerto Ricans; commercial love-cliché salsa versus experimental, political salsa; the role of *santería*, a blend of voodoo and Christianity; the perception that the more than three million Spanish-speaking New Yorkers constitute a "minority"; the Italian-American control of Fania, the single largest salsa-driven record company.

At the same time, *Salsa* underlines what Rubén Blades means when he says, "Salsa is the folklore of every city in Latin America." With shots of greats like Celia Cruz ("salsa's only female star," says the voice-over), Tito Puente, Charlie Palmieri (who died recently) and Blades in performance and in conversation, this fifty-two-minute film is a comprehensive, vital and instructive introduction.

Aside from older performers like Puente and Eddie Palmieri, one of the few younger *salseros* to make the leap from the Spanish-music ghetto to the white-dominated mainstream entertainment industry is the potential future president of his native Panama, Rubén Blades. *The Return of Rubén Blades* (Sony) is a Robert Mugge film. For those who haven't seen Mugge's terrific *Gospel According to Al Green* (Guiding Image) or *Gil Scott-Heron Live in Black Wax* (Sony), that means a deftly wrought blend of background, profile and performance.

The Return opens with a scene of Blades on graduation day at Harvard Law School. (Blades trained in Panama as a lawyer and got his degree in international law at Harvard.) We see him back in Panama City with his father and interviewer Pete Hamill, and in a U.S. studio with Linda Ronstadt; we hear his reflections on the problems of keeping Latin culture from being trampled by the American elephant, and his churning performances with his band Seis del Solar at the New York club S.O.B.'s. One outstanding sequence shows Blades quietly reciting the searing lyrics of his "Buscando America," then explaining them, then performing them with the band. This eighty-five-minute film is riveting and poignant, especially in light of recent events in Panama.

South Africa's recent history, musical as well as social, is discussed in Jeremy Marre's fine *Rhythm of Resistance* (Shanachie). As the narrator puts it at the outset of this forty-seven-minute film, "Black music is defiant music. It cannot be explicitly political, so it expresses its defiance in its tone." Marre chronicles that defiance and its roots in the brutalization of entire peoples.

From the police-guarded worker hostels, where rural men who work in the white man's cities are penned; to the white-owned recording studios busily recording Africans covering foreign hits; to the radio stations receiving records approved by the government censors—offending titles removed from the labels and offending tracks razored into oblivion—Marre draws a complete picture of a totalitarian society. Yet the music is wonderful: Ladysmith Black Mambazo, Johnny and Sipho (which became the core of Juluka, South Africa's first interracial band), the transcendent Mahotella Queens, the outrageous Philip Tabane and Malombo—the list goes on and on.

The most populous country on the continent, and until the oil bust the richest, Nigeria has wielded enormous influence over the pop music of West Africa. In its fifty-one minutes, Marre's *Konkombe* (Shanachie) presents that land's incredibly varied traditional and modern-pop styles. Performers include Sonny Okosun, King Sunny Adé, the irrepressible Fela Kuti, a host of traditional musicians and the Lijadu Sisters, who raise questions about the role of women in Africa's evolving cultures and, more specifically, in Nigerian music. Marre's film is rooted in a particular social history. One characteristic, ironic moment catches Nigerian funkster Okosun describing his early days, when every aspiring musician in Nigeria was an Elvis imitator, complete with homemade conk. Marre surrounds that observation with a history lesson about how the very drums and drumbeats forbidden by English colonists in the United States to slaves descended from West Africans became the rhythmic foundations of rock and roll, and then of international pop. By turns pointed and uplifting, *Konkombe* is an invaluable primer on Nigerian music. □

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MUSEUMS.

EDWARD CHAPPELL

Valentine Museum's Jim Crow

American history museums have a well-deserved reputation for presenting a sweetly consoling portrait of our past. Generally financed by conservative donors and oriented to affluent whites, museums have seldom attempted to shake entrenched values or encourage their patrons to reconsider comfortable perceptions of social reality. It might reasonably be assumed that there is little hope for thought-provoking history from these venerable pillars of community complacency.

Surprisingly, however, a small but influential group of thoughtful and politically challenging new museum offerings have recently appeared. Prominent among these is a current show at the Valentine Museum in Richmond, Virginia, dealing with racism and black-white relations in what had just ceased to be the capital of the Confederacy. Jim Crow: Racism and Reaction in the New South, Richmond, 1865–1940 (which runs until August 21), is the fourth in a series of Valentine

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shows dealing with black Richmonders.

The Valentine is a familiar species of institution, a museum dedicated to the history of its city, centered in the preserved nineteenth-century home of a rich local family, and recently best known for its generous collections of decorative smoking pipes, candlesticks and antique party dresses. But suggestions of a broader history have recently appeared in its galleries. Last year, a show dealt with African-American life before 1860, and it presented an industrial and urban side of slave and free-black labor that challenged stereotypes shared alike by historians and general museum-goers.

More than its predecessors, the present show has a gripping immediacy in its treatment of national patterns through a sharp local focus. The specificity of a local story can carry some dangers. One local black radio announcer called for picketing because a Ku Klux Klan costume from the 1920s is shown without accompanying material that explicitly illustrates Klan violence. Interestingly, Valentine curator Gregg Kimball responds that physical terrorism has been less a part of the Klan's activities in Richmond than it has elsewhere. The museum's perspective is clear, sufficiently so to have attracted vicious missives written on material from the National Association for the Advancement of White People.

Yet while Richmond has a reputation for genteel racism—inequality enforced by quiet economic choice rather than the gun and the bomb—the system has had a violent face. Demonstrations were brutally suppressed by police and Federal troops in 1866 and 1867, and the Second African Baptist Church was burned by arsonists on the eve of the Emancipation anniversary in 1866, although blacks had actively eschewed using this occasion to celebrate the Confederacy's fall. Neither was Richmond too genteel for voter fraud and intimidation at the polls, and whippings were not eliminated from the penal system until the 1880s.

The show begins with a simple and frank treatment of racial stereotypes, using mammy cooking jars and children's books with Little Black Sambo illustrations to suggest some of the popularly accepted means of robbing people of their individuality. Specious scientific and religious theorists as well as publishers and manufacturers contributed to the racist climate that the show examines.

Thus prepared, the visitor moves on to a treatment of the hard-fought progress in human rights achieved by blacks during Reconstruction. This is an important lesson in a land where fifty years of solid revisionist history have not dimmed white perceptions of that unjust, foreign regime. There still abound Virginians whose images of Reconstruction are closer to D.W. Griffith's than those of Francis Butler Simkins, an unrepentant Southerner who nevertheless was among the first historians to argue that the era was "no chamber of horrors."

White leaders soon set about reversing the achievements of Reconstruction by gerrymandering voting ward boundaries, dividing labor alliances by fomenting racial mistrust and creating racist zoning ordinances. Black Richmonders voted with important successes nonetheless, until the Virginia Constitution of 1902 used requirements of property tax, literacy and Confederate credentials to reduce the number of black voters from 6,427 to 760. No longer restrained by Federal coercion, white fear of black independence increasingly led to the exclusion of blacks from "good" neighborhoods and from equality in public services as well as the voting booth.

Not surprisingly, the show focuses on progressive Richmonders like white liberal Mary Munford and black businesswoman Maggie Walker, who led a predominantly female movement for interracial civic cooperation. A degree of racial progressivism was seen as beneficial to New South aims, though advances in education and employment were increasingly circumscribed by policies that were optimistically referred to as separate-but-equal. Ironically, some of the white male Richmonders who presented themselves as leading progressives in the 1930s still supported segregation twenty years later.

One of the boldest parts of the show is its unblinking look at several prominent racist ideologues, whose descendants probably still walk the local streets. Richmonders John Powell and Earnest Sevier Cox were both active in the 1920s in encouraging some of the worst prejudices of white Americans. Powell founded the Anglo-Saxon Clubs of America, which successfully promoted Virginia's Racial Integrity Law in 1924. The law defined anyone with less than 100 percent Caucasian blood as "colored" and outlawed interracial marriage.

An even less savory character, Cox styled himself as an explorer and ethnologist who specialized in studying the inferiority of the black race. He also founded an organization intended to propagate

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ethnic fear, this one called the White America Society. His studies were used to argue that all great cultures that have been exposed to Africans have degenerated into barbarism, and he actually advocated forced removal of American blacks to Africa. The swagger stick Cox carried on trips to Africa may be the most appalling object in the show—perhaps more evocative than a whip or Klan costume.

Lynchings, race riots and supremacist rhetoric from white newspapers and the likes of Powell and Cox made human rights activities clearly dangerous, as segregation closed off community services to half the city's population. *Richmond Planet* editor John Mitchell Jr. successfully urged fellow blacks to boycott streetcars for a year after the Virginia Passenger and Power Company segregated them in 1904, but Giles B. Jackson and other leaders argued that a legal challenge to the 1902 state Constitution would be more divisive than useful.

The show deals well with the forces that suppressed radical protest and illustrates, in quite human terms, that no one political strategy was solely effective and correct. Community organizations redirected individual energy and anger, and they helped people emotionally to survive oppression. Eventually they organized resistance efforts, though much of the force that caused significant legal change ultimately came from outside the city.

For all its courage and substance, the show is strikingly gentle. A Memphis design mode is used with surprising grace, giving the glass boxes and panels a handsome, restrained coherence. The viewers are left to move around the single large room at their own pace. Despite its carefully written captions and thoughtfully selected graphics, the Jim Crow show lacks the spirit of Spencer Crew's grand Smithsonian exhibit, Field to Factory, which chronicles black migration to northern cities from 1915 to 1940. (Happily, Field to Factory is running indefinitely.) Jim Crow is a quietly affecting, slowly angering exhibit that demands close attention. There are useful lessons to learn, but they are not easily yielded to the passive stroller. The lessons are also relatively straightforward, without the rich layers that Crew brings to his much larger show. In Richmond texts, video and a good audioguide are intentionally repetitive.

The appropriateness of this relatively nonconfrontational quality is debatable. By focusing on either mildly progressive or unusually rabid white Richmonders, the show ultimately lets people off the hook. Why, one wonders, does a show with clear political principles judiciously overlook the vast majority of white citizens who took part in neither integrated community efforts nor Klan rallies, but who were—and often remain—privately but inexorably racist in outlook?

Just possibly, the show may be following the most useful route by avoiding direct assault. From its position as a cultural institution, the museum provides a legitimacy for ideas that many, including traditional museum supporters, would otherwise not entertain. This is no excuse for favoring caution over content, but perhaps the Valentine planners realistically recognize some limits in affecting outlook, limits that do not apply to academic history writers. In any event, there is generous ground remaining for other American museums to cover. The Valentine has made an important advance, but it has hardly exhausted the subject.

The Jim Crow show does what history museums should do. It provides us with accessible information about critical issues, and compels us to think about those forces affecting our social relations today. Understated and nonprescriptive, it nonetheless assails social complacency. Especially in the Reagan/Bush era, more such shows would be very useful indeed. □

LETTERS.

(*Continued From Page 74*)

in the secular world but who are subject to constant religious supervision in the conduct of their lives. How is it possible to separate the two?

Opus Dei may have members from all walks of life, but it is elitist in the different treatment accorded upper- and middle-class members and those from the poorer strata, as shown by the different categories for members, depending on social class.

True, probably no Catholic institution has been subjected to so many investigations—itself a confirmation of the suspicions Opus has aroused—but it cannot deny that the concluding article in its 1982 Codex, or constitution (which is a published document), states that the 1950 Constitutions will continue in effect for all obligations not covered in the Codex. Approval of Opus Dei's statutes by the "universal church" simply means approval by Rome. The 1969 Opus Dei congress attempted to deal with Vatican criticisms that juridically it was neither fish nor fowl: Although it claimed to be a lay institute, it was directed by priests. John Paul's approval of an Opus Dei Prelature resolved the juridical problem but did not effectively alter Opus's command structure, which is still controlled by priests. I am skeptical of the claim that 1,600 bishops petitioned the Holy See to start the process for Escrivá's beatification, and would only believe it if I saw notarized copies of the signatures on such petitions.

I also question the claim that few men or women know better the work and feelings of the architects of the Second Vatican Council than does del Portillo. There is no evidence to support it. During the council, which took place between 1962 and 1965, thousands of documents were prepared by many different people (the preparatory committees received more than 9,000 proposals). There is no indication, either in the histories of the council or in the prefaces published with the council documents, that del Portillo played a significant role.

All religious leaders have a political agenda, because it is impossible to disassociate politics from social concerns arising from religious ones: How does one guarantee human rights and freedom if not through politics? And what of John Paul's role in Poland? Is not his support for Solidarity political? Christ did not have an ideological agenda, but his call to love inevitably had social and political consequences.

"On Social Concern" is, in my opinion, a visionary document in support of human rights, as I have written elsewhere. The problem is that the Pope's brave words are belied by Rome's disciplinary actions against the very church leaders who work on behalf of human rights, a recent example being the Vatican's attempt to silence Dom Pedro Casaldáliga, the outspoken bishop of the Brazilian Amazon and a fearless defender of the peasants and Indians who have been oppressed by the military and the Amazon's large landowners. No doubt John Paul's visits to Poland and Haiti had a positive impact in nudging those countries toward democracy, but the evidence does not support such a claim for the Philippines, Paraguay or Chile. As in his other allegations, Schmitt confuses different scenarios—the Pope did not unequivocably condemn the Pinochet dictatorship, as he did the Duvalier regime in Haiti—in order to make a one-sided case. Similarly, he would have us believe that Opus Dei is identified with the reformist spirit of the Second Vatican Council, when quite the opposite is true. *Penny Lernoux*

The Nation welcomes letters—typed, double spaced and no longer than 300 words, please. Longer letters may be edited for reasons of space. Our policy is to publish as many letters as space permits, but inevitably a backlog develops, so please bear with us.

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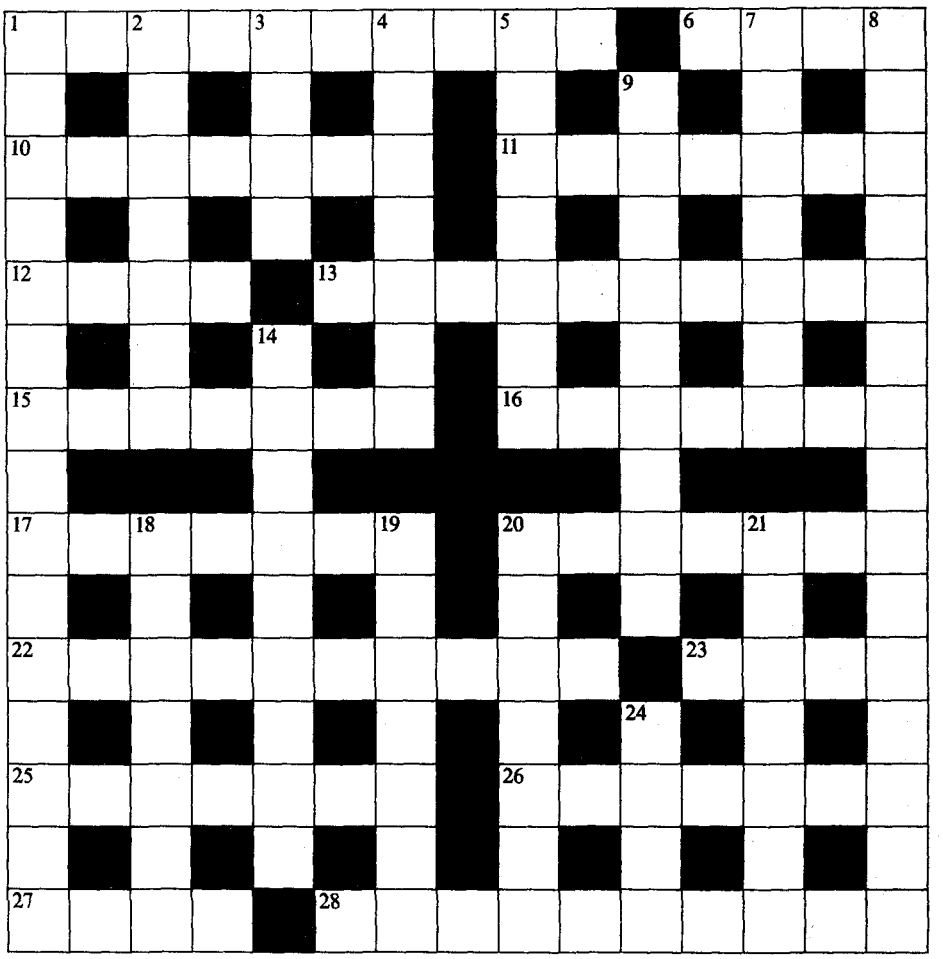

ACROSS

1 Taking care of one's mother, especially in England, but not talking about it? (7,3)
6 Prevent the return of certain vessels when 7 down doesn't get wet. (4)
10 Pie made by a parish priest, someone who should be knowledgeable about such things. (7)
11 Coming from a South American city to our country, causing some disturbance. (7)
12 Wood used in the job Oedipus did. (4)
13 Evidently this insect came to the party unaccompanied. (4,6)
15 If backward, one of the old church crowd might be useful to nine. (7)
16 One might secure rather primitive accommodations with it. (4,3)
17 Oh Death, where is thy transformation? (Don't expect a cool and calculated answer from one!) (7)
20 One might be found in the ring, or the mat, with the road torn up. (7)
22 There may be quite a strain in the work one does, but in the right setting, ice makes it. (10)
23 In any quiz, United Nations has to have a representative Indian. (4)
25 There's little account to the consumer being one who makes the charge. (7)
26 Typical Russian tool, as one might say—though novel to some. (7)
27 Back-bone doubled over—in fair condition? (2-2)
28 Play with 38, being a nymph trio combination. (10)

DOWN

1 A warning sign to eschew pot? (4,3,3,5)
2 Most of the epistle covers a verse form, being only one part of the story. (7)
3 In a little Spanish town, I cover a lot of ground. (4)
4 You'll find Miss Garson around at what might describe the northern Antilles. (7)
5 What some pianists play is the epitome of rectitude. (7)
7 Describing the dance shouldn't imply a single-stage operation. (3-4)
8 A flyer no longer with us suggests a commuter who got taken in the card game. (9,6)
9 Tiny moles which must be treated with grave concern. (9)
14 They say it pays to, when you find it coming up in rather antagonistic circumstances. (9)
18 The third deck would give you two more than this as a total, but the king may not be in them, for example. (7)
19 In a short month that has nothing but spirit in the end, people don't always behave with it. (7)
20 Hallelujah! You'll find it there, making his same mistake! 7)
21 When the half-baked description is about the square, you'll get steadfastly courageous.(7)
24 Travel by air, rather lightly? (4)

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